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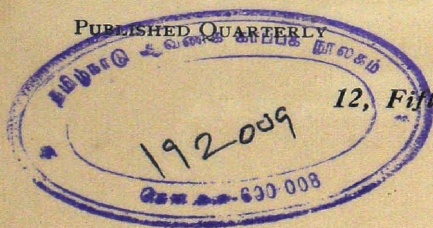
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CONTENTS

2040

	PAGE
<i>Frontispiece—</i>	
Arjuna and Urvasi, by the late D. Rama Rau	
Plucked in Flight, by Harindranath Chattopadhyaya (Mangalore), S. India	231
The Spirit of Autobiography, by V. Saranatha Iyengar (Trichinopoly), S. India	244
Two Poems, by Puran Singh (Dehra Dun), N. India	247
<i>The Stag with Red Eyes</i>	
<i>The Purple Flower</i>	
The Esoteric Basis of Indian Art (<i>concluded</i>), by K. N. Sitaram (Poona)	249
Two Poems, by May Folwell Hoisington (Rye, U. S. A.)	261
<i>The Purdah-wife burns Incense to Mother Durga</i>	
<i>Sestina</i>	
With Gerhart Hauptmann (translated from the German by Suhashini Nambiar), by E. Hirschberg (Berlin)	264
Two Poems, by Susan Miles (London)	268
<i>The Giant</i>	
<i>Billy</i>	
Avimāraḥ (Act IV), a Sanskrit Drama (<i>continued</i>), by K. Rama Pisharoti (Cochin State)	270
Chittarangan Das—a portrait.	
Notes and Comments	285

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PLUCKED IN FLIGHT*

(Translated from his own original Hindi.)

BY HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA.

1

Each star fills all heaven in reality and yet there is room for millions of stars, each flower crowds the entire earth with its mystery and yet there is place for myriads of flowers, each thought of man spreads its wings over eternal space, and yet there is ample room for the countless thoughts of ages of men.

2

O let us hush the little cries on our lips and hear the great cry of God in our hearts!

3

There are failures in the world of material wealth and striving, but there is no such thing in the inner world wherein everything from the tiny red ant to the highly-evolved man meets ever with golden success.

Access into the inner world is far easier than access into the outer.

4

The yogi is like a road that runs towards the House of the Beloved without moving an inch.

5

It is only when we begin to wake up to the utter emptiness of life that we begin to know the utter richness of it. Where the loneliness of mortal life begins there the immortal solitude begins, the golden solitude wherein the days and nights, ages and hours become One only Moment. It is in fleeting glimpses of this same Moment that the potter moulds his graceful pitchers out of pale green clay, and the glimmering fishes swim unafraid of death into the broad nets of the fisherman, the bud ventures forth into the new life of a flower, and the poet writes in eternal terms about a pale firefly under a sky adorned with blazing star-fires.

6

I have seen centuries of sowing and reaping, blue twilight haze, sunlight and cloud-shadow in the sad dreamy eyes of a buffalo.

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I have heard the ancient dust of old village roads, the distant mystic note of wayside pools in the voice of a cartman singing, and passing through the lane to-day in his creaking country-cart.

I have stood face to face with the hearth fires of bygone homes, the wistful water of some long-forgotten well, and the solemn congregation of countless yesterdays in the lonely thrill of a last bird at eve on a tree by the dim fields.

And in the first faint streak of morning light I have glimpsed within my soul the vague sweet joy in the limbs of a boatman ages ago just setting his crude craft afloat on the blue-crowned waters, the shivering hollow agony of some long-forgotten man walking toward the gallows, and as the morning grew in the fulness of light, I seemed to hear from far away yet near the strange echo of the chants of Rhishis who lived a thousand years ago.

7

I often wonder whether the first cry of a child the instant it enters the world, is not, after all, a signal of warning to the Unborn.

8

For every teardrop you make a woman shed through your unkindness, God forges for you in the fire of great anguish, the manacle of a fresh birth.

9

In the festival of the red funeral flames ashes clap their hands and dance like yogis who have seen the end of things. At the fair of yellow pyre-flames an Old Merchant with a black turban on his head, is selling a body for a song.

10

I heard the earth whispering to the sky, "There are some flowers I show to man which are snakes in disguise. One of them is the flower of Civilisation."

11

In the world of forms the day of coronation dawned. When suddenly a voice rang out of the crowd "Who is a king, and who is a beggar?".....Just then a Messenger from the kingdom of skulls rushed in with the message: "Let a few yards of earth decide."

12

A king drinks to the health of a beggar in the silence of a cemetery.

13

The seven colours of the rainbow are always looking for the eighth.

14

At the end of the road the traveller said to himself, "Lo, the road begins here." End is only a veiled beginning. God's dictionary of ultimates contains no words.

15

The Road of Divine lies between contraries. In the poem of compensation there is an endless movement of a twin-rhythm but behind which there is a single meaning. I have seen a hand which accepted bribes stricken with palsy, and an arrogant man once riding in a car scorning those walking in the street, reduced to a state of utter penury in a moment and hiding for very shame in the dark corners of a stranger's house. But between these crooked contraries of life the white Road runs straight and endlessly.

16

Man in spite of all his pride of knowledge still finds it difficult to forgive his brother for small faults, but I have heard a worm writhing under a carriage wheel and gasping for breath, cry out to the careless driver, "My friend, I forgive you."

17

There is the redness of peace in the sunset and the redness of war in angry eyes; you can never hope to count the colours with which He paints His eternal pictures.

18

"The flute is full of silence yet full of music," you tell me with large wonder in your eyes, my child. But do you not know that a thing is full of music because it is full of silence?

19

Who helps whom in the world? Lo, He who made the tree in the orchard painted it also with fruit. And it was He who struck it with lightning. He makes us and breaks us in deep silence while we look on.

20

To me both the tenderness of a flower and the fierceness of a storm-cloud are terrible.

God could mould a lily because He could carve the rich warm body of a tiger.

21

When the flame is lit the candle sheds incessant tears until its form fades away and dies into the dawn. In just such a manner when the vast Love

is lit within us, we weep and lose all sense of the body until we melt and become an immortal part of the sweet white Dawn.

22

Let me at least experience the piercing of thorns. This will keep me ever hopeful of the presence of the Rose somewhere beyond human ken.

23

How do you know that yon streak of violet and gold is not the coloured echo of the kiss of an earthly lover who has only just taken leave of his earthly beloved before setting forth to find the Great Love ?

24

God makes a flower with great struggle and difficulty. How easily we break it and tear its petals in a mood of idleness ?

Lo, He in His strange and superb generosity gives us the power to undo in a moment what He takes ages to do.

25

One often wonders how man can ever grow sinful in a world where the glittering snow falls and purple clouds appear above hill-tops.

26

He strikes and strikes the drum of our life with His hammer until our note rings true. It is then that He begins to beat time to the music of Love while the gaudy world dances lightly like a nautch-girl.

27

The greatest miracle to a man who knows the truth of the soul is that man has lost the power of performing miracles.

28

Where are we going ? What does it matter where ? So long as we move,

29

God paints the morrow with rich and lovely colours for one who has ceased to think about it.

30

Tyranny is a king who rules in the secret kingdom of cowardice.

31

The single white eye within the peacock has painted the countless eyes on its plumes.

32

The great ocean of silence throws up the twitter of a bird, the cry of a child, and the song of a mendicant.

33

You think a madman mad. He thinks the same of you. And in this both share an equal sanity.

34

To a shadow, light is its shadow.

35

The roofs of the temple are filled with the heavy dead smell of old bats. One eye of the temple-girl is turned towards the idol of stone, the other towards the young priest, who is the greatest lie of religion. The flowers offered to God during the day deck the hair of the harlot during the night. The temple bells are ringing the lonely exile of God.

36

How can you hope to arrive at the Doors of the Divine if you begin your journey on the lonely road with the shadow of broken human love dogging you at every step, and in your heart the cry of love which you treated in the past with scorn and indifference? No, my friend, you have not understood the search aright. Every smile of your baby, the least look of affection from the eyes of your wife are the veiled journeys towards the Doors of the Lord.

37

God, the Photographer, shuts on our face, again and again the world-room in order to fill it with darkness, without which the photograph of the ultimate Beauty could never be developed.

38

God was the first human being to die into perfection.

39

I chased a shadow until it brought me to the doors of light.

40

Sorrow is the sound of His footsteps coming towards us.

41

When the Infinite within wakes up to the Infinite without it is then that we feel the blueness of the sky and hear the silver harmony of waters.

42

I have enslaved Him by a continual response to the beauty of His universe.

43

Since childhood I have always seemed to hear strange whispers in the evening light and soft music in the redness of morning. Even when my mind is filled with the utmost gloom and depression of life in the world I have one side in my nature which is always aware that the ancient silver and gold is being scattered ceaselessly from the hidden purse of the king.

44

If we had ears sensitive enough to hear the deep voice in things we would know that the ocean cries out each time a drop leaves it, saying "O my little mother! I feel so weak and exhausted without you."

We would hear all the innumerable stars praying in one accord for the safety and guidance of a shooting star which drops out of heaven.

45

You would be called a fool if you tried to measure the rainbow with a measuring tape with which you measure a coloured cloth for your garment, and if, likewise, you thought you could comprehend the burning heart of a tiger by means of the small tremulous shadow of a crouching lamb. Each thing in the universe contains its own peculiar law and it is nothing short of tyranny if you lay down one law for the tree and the elephant, in order to bind them into a forced harmony.

But there is One Law, indeed, which is common to all things, and it is that which deals not with outer forms, but with the essence behind them which is one.

46

In the same moment diverse things happen in diverse places. A mother is teaching her child to walk, a man is cheating another in the market square, a bird is sitting beside a field, a shadow is creeping slowly over a stone, a violin is being played by a neighbour, and a woman is breathing her last breath in the opposite house. But I seem ever to feel vaguely behind all these the hand of the Artist who is struggling through them to paint the last picture and never really finds the colours He wants.

47

Because what we call man is something midway between man and animal, we marvel when we come across a saint who is the natural man.

48

It is anything but sacrifice when we give up a bad and unnecessary habit : it is a tremendous sacrifice, indeed, when we accept to adopt it.

49

A whole lifetime's afflictions and trials weigh so much less than one single moment of peace which God grants us at the end of them.

50

Time will yet rummage among the dust-heaps of centuries books which the critics scorned and swept aside with a proud gesture of discrimination. For Time is the critic of critics and bides his time since he is not anxious for the fleeting applause of newspapers.

51

When a leaf falls a leaf is born.

52

Somebody seems to be ever waiting for the arrival of an unknown Guest in the midst of the noise and tumult of the day's work. It is this waiting that unconsciously fills us with new strength and courage to face life's little demands day after day.

53

Prepare to walk the road of the world alone if you decide to utter the truth. For the life of truth is lonely like the moon that moves through utter darkness over a world fast asleep.

54

When two men meet on earth heaven records a beautiful event in the history of God.

55

God keeps a clear account of the flowers of His fields, and of the stars in the sky.

And likewise the thoughts of men. But deeds pass unnoticed like shadows before His eyes.

56

What others left unsung we sing, and what we leave unsung others sing in God's good time.

57

My sorrow is a footprint left on the path of life by someone who has already passed it, a track on the silent journey.

58

In a mood of love that which seemed ephemeral grows vivid with the colours of eternity.

59

To judge the every-day life of an artist by his work is like judging the nature of a flute of reed by the music the flutist plays upon it. For both are at best only mediums which, when the touch of the player is removed, become plain and common.

60

Very often I have felt that I have held on the hollow of my palm the world like a green and gold bubble.

61

To be strong in wickedness is better than to be weak in goodness. The former is a nearer step to sainthood than the latter.

62

For every unborn seed deep-sealed in the dumb earth God shapes a drop of refreshing rain. He moulds the scorpion and its food simultaneously. But man who has robbed his brother of food and rebelled against his Maker has spread inequality for humanity in the world.

63

O irony of the world ! when a poor man steals a handful of grain from the granary of the rich man, he is punished, but when the rich man grows fat upon the flesh and blood of the labourer, he is held in supreme respect by law.

64

To eat even one morsel of food more than one's hunger truly needs is a subtle form of theft.

65

To clothe yourself more than your body actually needs is to strip another naked.

66

The longer God takes to mete out retribution, the more terrible will it be. The greater the evil, the greater is the time He needs to strike. His picture of wrath takes care to be perfect and well-finished, and this takes a long time.

67

God is never in a hurry because He has not to count the days of weeks nor catch a train.

68

Intellect forges heavy chains of lead for the soul.

69

I saw centuries running out of the heart of a dying glow-worm last night. Infinity plays at hide and seek in the heart of the minutest creature on earth.

70

The peasant in a loin-cloth who can describe a harvest in his mother-tongue is surely to be envied by you who can scarcely go beyond the description of an Oxford boat-race in English.

Contact with the West has brought for the young man of India two things of note among many . . . namely the suit and scepticism. The former hides an unhealthy body, the latter an unhealthy soul. Health can begin for him only when he makes up his mind to give them up.

Empty life, empty laughter, empty talk, and all things empty but his wine-cup and purse . . . this is modern culture as an England-returned Indian often understands it.

To merely say, "Good morning," or "How do you do," or "Will you dine with me to-morrow at seven," is not manners. Come with me to a peasant's home and I shall show you there what the word means.

Lord's mercy on you ! your library contains only English books. Do you forget that India too has writers ?

When I wrote my first song in Hindi I felt like an exile just returned home after many long and tedious years in the Andamans.

God is a great Humourist. This you realize when a dark-skinned Indian, by the dull magic of hat-and-boots, seriously sets out to hypnotise his countrymen into the belief that he is an Englishman !

"The washerman's dog belongs neither to the bank of the river nor the house," is a well-known Urdu maxim. The modern Indian is one who could safely be classed with the washerman's dog.

In art the silent appreciation of the peasant outweighs the loud applause of the bourgeois.

No peasant, no art.

There is a richness in the vocabulary of a peasant which can shame your years of education, my friend.

A man in rags who knows his mother-tongue is truly more well-dressed than a well-dressed man who has forgotten it, which is worse than being naked.

71

It is not that we have no knowledge, but the truth is that we have gradually forgotten, through trifling desires and an addition of little habits at every step, the knowledge that we know.

72

It was only when I closed my eyes for the first time that I realized the blindness of open eyes.

73

Says the poet Kabir, "Of what avail is it if you are tall in your pride of power, like a date palm tree if like it you neither lend a generous shadow to the tired traveller nor bear your fruits, which are always borne so high aloft, for the hungry beggar who seeks it?"

Says the clay to the potter, "Alas, poor potter! you cut such a pitiful figure in your courtyard, trying with all your art and inspiration to enclose and seal me up. Do you really forget O foolish one! that when your little day is done it will be my turn to enclose and seal you up for ever?"

74

Religion is a spiritual technique.

They spent their days fighting over the fence which hedged in the rose-garden, until at last, when the fight was over they found that the roses had withered.

Silence is prayer.

To me every bird is a creed, every flower a religion.

The river is a Hindu's sacred thread, the raindrops are the beads of a Christian's rosary, and the note of the bird at sunset a Muslim's call to prayer.

75

When we are in the whirl of the world's phantom needs and necessities, the silence of the soul is farther from us than the farthest star on the verge of night. But when we come face to face with, say, a squirrel on a bough tinged with a pale orange glow of evening, the silence grows within the heart to something which exceeds the world and even contains it.

76

The slow rhythmic round of the spinning-wheel has the power of inspiring a criminal to evolve a religion for himself.

There is an intense hidden centre of brotherhood silently waiting to be recognised in each revolution of the spinning wheel.

When the spinning-wheel stops singing, Famine starts dancing.

77

The shadow of a harlot is the winding sheet of a nation.

78

The blood of a dove scorched the point of a proud arrow like fire, until it cried out to the heavens for mercy.

79

In the Tower of Silence the vultures are fighting with each other for the eyes of a young woman which once saw the shadows of vultures passing over green hilltops in the noonday.

80

It is a theatrical gesture at best when a tyrant flourishes his sword before the unyielding man of truth.

81

When I light my lamp every night I cease to wonder at the fact that God lights His stars night after night through the slow centuries.

82

The sculptor's eye sees a beautiful figure imprisoned in a slab of marble, long before he sets to free it.

83

Soul-Force asked Time "Who is that weeping so helplessly in the shadows?" Time replied, "Lo, master, his name is Machine Gun."

84

The progress of the last century has been like that of a swift arrow which speeds towards a bird to wound it, and not like the slow steady progress of a soft red insect which treads a broad leaf in order to reach an innocent goal.

85

The mouse, the tiger, the precious stone . . . they are all friendly characters in the Drama of my Dream.

86

I am sure that what man calls a dewdrop is a clear sign that God has been weeping alone in the darkness over the broken world of His making.

87

As in a paper chase, passions leave for us false tracks in order to deceive us. Mislead by them we waste a lot of time running now here, now there. But there are some who, like experienced hounds in the game, reach the goal soon, crying "Not this, Not this," and avoiding thereby useless waste of time.

88

The fierce wind which howls like a demon in this night of storm, plays as on a silver flute soft music through a chink in my window.

89

Sometimes the huge azure heaven becomes the ample memory of an ancestor.

90

When man hurts God, He turns in deep silence for solace to a rose-bud, and hides His hope in the courageous tiny flash of the firefly in the darkness.

91

The thought that our ancestors saw the same blue sky a thousand years ago as we do to-day, spans a sudden bridge over time, and I seem to walk over it and greet them on the other side as easily and really as we greet friends living on the farther side of a bridge of iron.

92

The incense-gum cried, "Burn me that I may realise my hidden fragrance." The arrow sang, "Bid me farewell dear Bow! my sweet Comrade! that I may know the capacity of flight in me." But man trembling in utter weakness hid like a coward in dark corners from His Master, thereby postponing the hour of self-realisation, the hour of incense and flight born out of fire and separation.

93

The cloud is angry with the aeroplane, the porpoise is angry with the ship, the dust is angry with the motor-car.

94

The mill is a house of death where they give you bread and kill you.

95

Have you heard a rupee singing its proud song? It sings of war between man and man, of the woman wandering the silent lanes at night, of clerks working in their offices from morning till night without respite, of the soul of the artist deserting its high throne, and of men sitting in the dull gloom of prisons.

One rupee is enough to blot the stars out of memory.

JULY 1925]

PLUCKED IN FLIGHT

243

96

You can divide the land up into parts and call them yours. But you cannot touch the sky, my friend, and that is my consolation.

97

The death of an author serves as a magnifying glass to the work he leaves behind him.

98

The crowd is a lonely thing. I am a crowd.

99

I value the drop more than the ocean, the ray more than the sun, the blade more than the ricefield.

100

Every thought is a milestone of the heart, every deed the beginning of a new era in the history of the spirit. Every life written down simply and sincerely is literature.

HARINDRANATH CHATTOPADHYAYA.



THE SPIRIT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY V. SARANATHA IYENGAR.

Some say that writing in a diary, a man should tell only of trivial emotions and goings-on, and that they are of more use to the diarist himself and to his reader. This habit of holding cheap our own brave translunary things does not take account of the fact that sometimes we are greater than we know. Why should the diarist take himself down at all by distrusting his moments of generous self-love and enthusiasm? I, for one, like the company of the self-worshippers, and remember that the chronicler of small beer in one's own life is a pretty noticeable kind of egotist. The other variety is that type of men who threaten to strike the stars with their sublime heads, and sometimes really bring it off.

How small a part, indeed, are the great emotions, of a decent every-day order of living where the mind and only the five senses matter—no chance of a *sixth* sense or half-sense—, and only one or two of the ten commandments need apply? Most men would stop with the prayer "Give us this day our daily bread" and perhaps add "our cigar and a mate," and their adventures are from Great Street to Little Street. I speak of mental adventures also. But when one wishes to put down something as a record of oneself at the end of the day, a brittle glory shineth on one's doings, and for the time, one is a new creature. Then as a human record, we find that everything, good or bad, is drawn to scale in this portrayal of life, and the full sum of a man is only this, that there are some virtues, beauties, livings, friends, which to him and for the time and the season exceed account. This is how the soul of a man like Pepys measures life. In somewhat the same way does the well-tuned pietist also achieve a certain perfection, like Amiel or Dorothy Wordsworth. The great business of living turns into a decorative or a *self*-decorative art for each of these characters, who do not experience the effort and the drooping of him who "takes dejectedly his seat on the intellectual throne." Another class of egotists is made up of those who "soul-hydroptic with a sacred thirst" suck at the flagon and are in most cases "creed-drunk" like Mahomet. A man in this case talks as if he were not only his brother's keeper but his maker's. But a different order of saints which incongruously enough includes Charles Lamb, comprises the great mystics and others, delicate workers, men with a beautiful self-love. The small diarist who puts on a certain charm, has much of their skill in dealing with all "stuff of the conscience" though he is content with inconsequential, but very human things. Another type, the

proud soul, such as Milton's, describes itself as elaborately as a planet would, if it be given to self-recording, and could write in a diary or write *Sonnets*. "Thy soul was like a star" said Wordsworth of his master, but the image of a planet brings the idea of that disturbance of the soul which often seized upon Milton as well as on Shelley who was a small but fiery planet. Indeed, for a thinking man or artist, there is an activity which is quite inward, a darkly moving abstract existence—Blake's *Mental stripe* in another form—essentially different from his human contacts, his normal, animal, spiritual and social engagements in life. *Endymion*, *Alastor*, and indeed all Shelley's poetry, Shakespeare in the *Sonnets*, Browning's psychological exercise and sensationalism exemplify this, besides some of the tumultuous parts of every great scripture like *Isaiah* in the Old Testament. Insight, not pleasure, is the note of these imaginative records. Disdaining for the time the fine, careless raptures and contentments of this life, they have a sight of that kingdom-come in which their gain would be not immortality, but creative skill in equality with the gods. The *Gita* has a phrase for this "māma sādharma-yamāgatāh."

There are, however, men who do not attain this, but have a piety, the worship of a higher spirit of judgment in oneself which makes one great-hearted and sane always. Fitzgerald reached something like this, and Renan also. I think, and Goëthe, the greatest of these. "The leader is fairest, but all are divine." These are the great reconcilers, going the round of every-day circumstance, asking for skill in the ways of feeling and doing, healers of men and judges, while in Goëthe's marvellous case, the skill of great creating nature came along with the other gifts. The Autobiography of Goëthe is a scripture of one mode of intellectual and moral life. Goëthe is among those who are *not* tired "of tears and laughter and men that laugh and weep, of what may come hereafter for men that sow to reap." He waits for each and other, he waits for all men born, in his own phrase he is a *disciple*; but he brings to us the Spirit of Truth.

Autobiography is, in this way, a serious form of art in the hands of one who is endowed with the spirit of judgment, and one should add the "spirit of burning" ideas which come to the mind of Isaiah together. A gift of sympathy, a feeling for the infirmities of the race, is no doubt the quality of the great critics of life and morality, but one should like piety to go along not only with charity, but in season with the spirit of a "good hater." He may hate with just that good-tempered dislike which is necessary to what Bacon described as "dry light." If the moralist tells of his own folly with the same wide-awake scorn that he would have for the unconsecrated foolishness of others, then he is a rare physician, and he gives us, as Goëthe does, the higher kind of

Autobiography. Again, when an artist is inordinately excited at the pageant of his own spiritual journey and thrills to the beauty and fervour of his own ideas, and is wholly unashamed of his extravagances, he gives us a touching history of the spirit blowing where it listeth, that which is divine, blowing over the unlikely places of human nature. Rousseau's *Confessions* and some intimate books of the Russians are of this kind. But, usually, the privilege of writing in a diary does not belong to the gifted alone, but is, of right, the Shopkeeper's, the Parliament man's, the Clergyman's and the Civil Service Officer's as well. When such people write of themselves and others, there is a cheeriness about the job which makes them extraordinarily sapient, and they give their opinions of things which are usually not in their line, in a convincingly childish manner. Thus letters, love, religion, and other high matters become interesting as these people look at them; to them there is a sense of accomplishment, a sense of acquired merit which is their gain; to us the gladsomeness of finding how, after all, such a thing as human nature is the beauty of the world. No doubt some essential gift of saying things comes to the man who works and has dealings with his fellowmen; else, the brave men of the days of the epics should not have had that large utterance, nor could the active men, Cavaliers or Puritans, of every later age have had their say. So, one has to make much of the intellectual Commoner—Soldier, Priest or Shopman—, as the man who in his intimate hours carries on those simple processes by which the impulses of his time and country come into practice. This happens, for instance, in a time of war when every man shares the mental strife of the choice and master-spirits of the hour. So no man or woman whose life is of some account in his or her particular station, wants the natural touch; nay, other things—even some of the graces of character—are added unto them who constantly take thought in their diaries for the every-day humanity that pulses around and within them. For theirs is “neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks,”—the giving of thanks to the human heart by which they live. For, even in a strenuous life, we wrestle not against flesh and blood, and the soul of our enemy takes a friendly hue from an eye that hath kept watch over man's mortality.

V. SARANATHA IYENGAR.

TRICHINOPOLY, S. INDIA, }
July 1925. }

Two Poems

THE STAG WITH RED EYES

The forest fire came leaping from behind,
And he had no passage on either side,
Before him the huntsman crouched, he had aimed his dart, the arrow
 would soon, soon, be through his heart ;
There is no escape from death ;
And all die thus, some fall in the tiger's mouth, some in the huntsman's
 trap.
And some in all-burnt forest lie charred, only outlines left ;
But this stag had deep, red eyes, his skin was of gold,
On his antlers was borne the blue vast sky,
In its white neck hung a little silver Heart-bell of the Master that
 tinkled deep unto the farthest ends of life ;
The huntsman lay cold in death ;
And the winds drank the fires up,
The Golden Stag was rescued ;
It was he who had risen through merest luck to a lofty acquaintance
 with God,
And the little silver bell in his neck tinkled still through the forests
 deep,
As the stag ate again the little rising tufts of grass, and romped ;
As he drank the water from the flowing stream, and looked up to the
 Master whom he could not see, the limpid water dripping from
 his mouth in beads ;
As bending his head he drank again and drinking lifted up his gaze
 many times more and bent low and drank again and ran away
 into the deep shades of All-death.

THE PURPLE FLOWER.

On the bare hot sands inglorious,—the Purple Flower blooms ;
Its golden crown shines with a wreath of dewdrops as a chain of stars,
The Purple Flower waves its head aloft with new distinction of beauty
of its own,
The rough-torn leaves with bristling spears and the thorns attend,—the
most imperfect guard the rare perfection in strange, pure zest.
It is like the magic kingly court of a Celestial Prince,
Nay, the soul is escaping the fetters of the earth.
Freedom blossoms in the Fair Prisoner's eyes,
It is just a glorious birth ;
The desert offers the poison cup—
And the Purple Flower drinks it all,
And alone in the desert it laughs ;
The triumphant vanishing beauty of the Purple Flower, flows in dainty
wreaths of smiles, and engulfs the base desert with the flash
of Immortality.

PURAN SINGH

THE ESOTERIC BASIS OF INDIAN ART

(Concluded from Vol. V, No. 3)

BY K. N. SITARAM

Scarcely less sympathetic with the humble creation and lost in the love of nature, are the inimitable sculptures that adorn the railings of Barhut, a majority of fragments of which now adorn the Indian Museum at Calcutta.

As compared with those at Saranath these appear less developed or rather crude, and though here too the bold and vigorous touch of the Indian master-sculptor is not wanting, still these stand to the ones at Saranath only in the relation of a lisping infant to a man of maturity. Though the study of animal life is characterised here also by the same depth of feeling and understanding as that displayed in earlier creations at Saranath, still these possess only the naivetè and the naturalness of Saranath, but not its perfection of technique. One imagines, in this attempt, the Indian sculptor first essaying to speak out his language of stone, which language attains a worthy diction and grammar only at Saranath.

As illustrations, let us take (1) Photo (P.W.) the fragment of the railing with its top piece shaped like a cushion supported as it is on three pillars all appropriately sculptured, as well as the four neglected stone pillars jointed to each other as the base and the top, the latter part of which ends in four different down-turned capitals, on the tops of which a simple and ornamental moulding of lotus petals stands supporting a lion in a recumbent posture. Now in this the down-turned lotus capitals are very good, and do not fall far behind those at Saranath in workmanship, while the lion is executed very shabbily. There may be two reasons for this. Probably, as mentioned previously, the school was yet in its infancy and though it did not lack the vigour of the sympathy which characterised Saranath, still it totally lacked the touch and the perfection in the technique, which only the trained hand of a master who has had a long schooling can give. Another reason may lie in the fact that to those whose hands chiselled Barhut the lion was not as familiar as the elephant, and so they had to trust for its proper representation more to their imagination than to an actual sight of the Lord of Beasts in flesh and blood. This same defect also is found in the representation of the two other marching lions which, like the seated elephants, whose technique by the way is perfect and natural, pay homage to the sacred tree, in the procession frieze which

cushions the top of its three supporting pillars. From this period onwards one may say that the history of the progress of lion sculpture in India is written only in its decay, and lion representation gets worse and worse. We may say that the sculpture too was later, or was executed pretty well south or east of Saranath, by artists whose clumsiness and unnaturalness in its representation was a sure index of the number of generations that had elapsed since their forefathers saw that particular beast. Coming to the other animal figures, as those of the elephants which form part of the procession frieze, those that carry a turbaned rider, or those who pour the water of abisheka (coronation?) over the head of Lakshmi seated in the vira posture on a freely opened lotus, as well as of horses, we feel that these animals were sculptured by men who were in living daily contact with them and observed and sympathised with them at close quarters, and had not to imagine them as they had to do in the case of the lion. Besides its value from the point of view of sculpture, this sculpture is the first of its kind which depicts very graphically to us what an ancient chaitya cave was like, and if we compare this sculptural representation of it with what it appears to be from the point of view of architectonics one can say that this form of construction was well known to the ancient Indians. The word chaitya is derived from the Sanskrit word *chita* or funeral pyre; and hence this is a funerary monument which the ancient Indians erected in honour of their greatest or the holiest dead, in the same way as the Egyptians erected pyramids and other buildings to serve a similar purpose.

Evidently the roof bent like the arch of an Indian palanquin and the beams supporting the top, were an imitation of a similar wooden structure, and all chaitya caves are erected in the same style, if we take such simple ones as the Lomas Rishi and the humbler ones on the western coast like those at Bagh, Pitalkora, etc., or gigantic ones like those at Karli or at Ajanta. These were hewn out of the living rock, the mountains being hollowed out to make room for them, and produced on principles as sculpture, *i.e.*, brought to existence by subtraction and not like architecture by addition.

The primitive thatched wooden structure of which these were only an imitation in stone are even to-day the type of architectural erections used for the purposes of living and worship among the Todas and other aboriginal inhabitants of India. If one enters a Toda hut belonging to a chief, such as the one which is situated in the confines of the public park at Ootacamund, and then enters one of their chaitya caves, he will be surprised to find that this chaitya style in stone is only an imitation of a wooden Toda place of worship in the more intractable material. Besides this, from these sculptures we can

gather what ancient Indian architecture was like from the plastic representations of the same in stone. This railing also furnishes us for the first time with the famous rosette ornament in the shape of a medallion, which wavers, as the hand or the fancy of the sculptor suggested, between a sculptural representation of a fully-opened lotus with all its filaments complete, or the involutions of a conch, or of an Indian caterpillar when it curls itself up against attack with its head as centre.

The other sculptures of this school, like the Chanda Yakshini and the propitiating Kubera standing on a horse and a dwarf, the four figures worshipping the sacred Hare (namely the sculptural representation of the famous Bodhi tree at Uruvila) with garlands and with prayers, the railing which, supported by three dwarfs, displays the figure of a man who is in the act of tying his turban, accompanied by his wife holding a flower in her hand, the sculpture depicting a mantapa wherein before a throne containing the sacred footprints of the Tathagatha, king Ajatasatru bows down in an attitude of reverence; the sculptured couple under a less ornamented but similar styled mantapa wherein the husband swears his innocence to his life partner who is accusing him of breach of the marital contract, supported as it is by the accusations which she listens to from her pet parrot,—all these and the group of beings who revere and pay homage to a sacred stupa. Everyone of these breathes the very spirit of early Indian art, its vigour, naturalness, naivetè, and the intimate sympathy which it displays with animal and plant life. This stupa sculpture too is invaluable to us, for this is the earliest representation of similar structures whose number became legion later on. Here also as in the later famous ones at Sanchi, Amaravati and elsewhere, we have the central dome or the stupa proper, enshrining the relics of the holy ashes of the beloved one, surrounded by a prakara or railing of stone for pradakshina and ornamented with either leaf or flower mouldings, while the bulge or the doom of the stupa is coated with fine chunam and ornamented with stone on which similar ornaments are chiselled. This central dome supports another small rectangular structure ending in pediments and pillars, finally the whole being crowned by the usual umbrellas or the dangling festoons and garlands. Beyond this central structure, are situated the usual toranas or gateways, facing the four cardinal quarters either made of wood, or stone imitations of the same. Thus we see that the sculptures which adorn this stupa at Barhut, now dismantled and housed in the Indian Museum at Calcutta, are invaluable for the student of Indian architecture, for here it is we see the earliest sculptural representation of the various types, haityas, stupas, and viharas, as well of ancient Indian town planning and palace construction. In a word, by means of this we can not only reconstruct an ancient Indian city complete with its structures, both secular and

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otherwise, but this unique collection gives us also a good idea of the social life of the people at the period, their dress, food, methods of enjoyment, etc. Contemporary with these sculptures from Barhut, or slightly anterior to them, are the railings of Buddha Gaya, but apart from containing a few rosettes and other ornaments they are not of much value architecturally or sculpturally, except it be to enlighten us as to the nature of an ancient Indian stone railing. Then follow in chronological order the toranas or the gateways of Sanchi, among which the most important are the northern, western, and eastern ones. Here one may say that the ancient Indian sculpture attained its apogee of greatness, as these excel in several respects even those at Saranath, though the technique displayed reminds one more of the best achievements of an ivory or wood carver than of a sculptor whose chief work lay in stone. An inscription says that a certain wooden gateway was substituted by a stone one and this was the gift of the ivory workers of Vedisa.

Among these toranas the northern seems to be the best, although the eastern has attracted more the attention of Europe, for do not its plaster models adorn the museums of the three important capital cities of Europe—London, Paris and Berlin? These toranas too depict the unity of Indian life, and are a true picture of the deep sympathy with the divine being with which the Indian architect can arrange in an equal attitude of piety men as well as animals like the elephant and birds like the peacock. Though the animal, bird and human sculpture leaves nothing to be desired, and the geometrical scrolls and patterns are chiselled with the utmost nicety stone is capable of, still the lion sculptures are very sorry productions and do but tend to confirm our previous statement that after Saranath the progress of chiselling this particular animal can be written only in its decay. These toranas also contain sculptural representations of the stupas, nay one might even imagine that they represent the stupas at Sanchi itself in all their glory, just as the South Indian temples contain in plaster, stucco, or stone typical representations of themselves and their gopuras in miniature. Since our purpose here is to deal at length only with Architecture and to bring in sculpture only incidentally, so as to show how the former evolved itself from the latter, we shall leave for another place a full discussion of its sculpture and its general bearing on Indian art, such as painting and bronzes, with which it has more to do than with architecture.

The Rani gumpha at Udayagiri next claims our attention, as it also only too well illustrates our thesis that the origin of Indian stone architecture was from a wooden prototype. The remnants from Amravati stupas, twenty miles from Bezwada, are now housed partly in the Madras Museum and partly in the British Museum (London). Thanks to the efforts of our rulers, however much we may

blame them for other acts elsewhere, as for making the sculptures of Ganjarkondu Cholapuram serve no other purpose than to dam the waters of the Cauvery, still in this instance, as in many others, the most violently anti-English Indian must admit that but for the timely interference of the English these inimitable marbles would have been reduced to chunam in no time by the Zamindars there, whose appalling crimes of ignorance could be equalled by their vandalism and miserly greed. Still, from the remnants preserved we can construct with our minds' vision types of what those noble fanes must have looked like in their days of glory, and imagine what priceless sculptures and paintings they must have enshrined. Besides their artistic value, the Amaravati stupas, as well as those adjoining, like those at Battaprolu, Ghantasala, etc., furnish us with definite data whereby we can trace the evolution of Buddha representation from mythology to actuality. In the earliest specimens of the fragments preserved from this stupa in the British Museum we find that in the sculptor who decorated this noble fane and chiselled on it the life story of the Desabala, symbolical representation inspired a greater love and reverence than the actuality. So to him an empty throne, an empty seat under the sacred tree, or a riderless horse with the white umbrella held over it, signified more than a representation of the Desabala in flesh and blood. So in the earlier stages the Buddha is represented only by such symbols, as for example, the *maha nishkramana* is represented by a riderless horse over which an umbrella is held and whose feet are supported by Devas to deaden the sound of its movements. Later on, slowly, the figure of the Buddha is substituted till finally we come to that period of this school which synchronises with the early developments of the Gandhara school, and we find the Indian sculptor has given up his reluctance to symbolized representation and become more prosaic by representing the Tathagatha in all his actuality with his crown of curly hair and Ushnisha. Thus these Amaravati sculptures form as it were a transition stage wherein the early Indian symbology of the sculptural representation of the Tathagatha as illustrated in the Asokan Saranath, Barhut, and Sanchi gives place to the actual representation of his sacred person as found in the later Amaravati, Gupta, Ajanta, and the Gandhara schools; and thus is set up the process wherein the spirit finally succumbs to matter, and the finest faculties of the Indian brain and heart, Bhakti and Prema, yield their place to merely a desire to produce: and the subtle Indian spirit, the spirit that produced and breathes in the Upanishads and in the earlier sutras, finally wings its way out from the grossness of material encumbrance, with which it had been saddled by the decadent Greco-Roman school of the 3rd century after Christ in some of its latter day uncouth perpetrations of the Buddha figures, wherein the static spirit of Indian and Asiatic Yogism, namely, the Tathagatha, is made so heavy, gross, material and uncomfortably stout, as to make us tremble for his safety perched as

he is on his insecure lotus, and to make him take pity on his unsuccessful attempt to evolve a Dharma chakra pravarthana, or a chit mudra with his too fleshy fingers, which would not bend and have lost all their suppleness. (Illustration photo L.C.) After the erection of these stupas the place of stone as building and sculptural material becomes fully established, as far as the construction of stupas pradakshina paths and toranas is concerned.

If we pass on now to the other types of Buddhist architecture, namely, the chaitya, the vihara, etc., we find that the same development takes place here also as in the case of the Dhatugarbha, Dagoba or the stupa. Here also we find that the earliest ones were of wood, and that the Viswakarma or the indigenous school of wood-work slowly gave place to the imported Maya school of stone architecture, and the evolution of the one from the other was slow, steady and painful.

If we take the instances of the Barabar caves near Gaya, the early Buddhistic caves on the Khandagiri and the Udayagiri hills in Orissa or the Loma Rishi, or such chaitya and viharas as Bagh, Pitalkora Karli or Ajanta, we witness this same painful process of the stone mason trying to imitate the best work of the wood carver in an untractable medium which has none of the suppleness of his prototype, namely, wood, and achieve perfection after infinite patience. Strange to say the technique displayed in these structures is the technique of the carpenter and not the stonemason ! In a few instances, pieces of stone have been purposely cut away and replaced by wood !

Thus we see that the Indian master builder, who was primarily a carpenter and secondly only a stonemason, or rather a Viswakarma first and then only a Maya, preferred for a fairly long time to work in wood, and only later on reconciled himself to work in stone. Even though he gave up with a sigh the Viswakarma work, still he retained, with a longing almost uncanny, the memory and the strong impression of the period when he was yet in the swathing clothes of his infancy, and went about with his pinafore fastened on tight even after he had donned the shorts of a school-boy, a boy whose teacher was now Maya and whose school did not recognise the lessons which he had learnt in his nursery. Strange to say the impressions received in infancy are the strongest, and the feelings which one imbibes along with his mother's milk last longest in life, however blurred and dimmed the outlines may become as life advances. So also we find in the evolution of stone architecture in India this same tendency to be naive and childlike. Not only did the early masters mentioned above, those who hewed out Bagh, Pitalkora, Romas Rishi, and Barabar, truckle with this tendency, but the masters who hewed out Karli, Ajanta, Elephanta and Badami hugged it

also to their bosoms out in South India ; those who erected the thousand-pillared mantapams at Madura and Chidambaram cherished this same early memory and we can trace this tendency in some of the best erections or additions of the Vijayanagar period of South Indian architecture, as well as in South Indian buildings which were erected barely a couple of centuries ago. The mani mantapa of the Brihannayaki temple at Burmadesam (Tinnevely District) and the little gem of a South Indian shrine at Krishnapuram (near Palamcottah) in the same district, only show us how difficult it is to get out of our minds the sublimely divine memories of our infancy, and proves the rule that when man the architect once more comes back to his old age or second infancy as Shakespeare would put it, the memories of his baby-days come back to him with redoubled force and love, and the greatest things that give him pleasure and sustain him through this stage of life when he is sans teeth, sans eyes, are not the glories and the achievements of his full-blown youth or vigorous manhood, but the tender memories, the simple nursery rhymes, and the fondest associations of his babyhood. Even so the Indian architect or Purusha who evolved his earliest stone monuments by imitating his mother Prakriti's work from nature, be it in forest or mountain, and applied the lessons he had learnt from wooden models to stone, in his second childhood (seventeen centuries after that) when he was without vigour, sans eyes, sans teeth, cherished this delightful memory of his angel-like innocent infancy, and with the same hands which in their senility and tenderness could scarcely hold the chisel, fashioned out the mani mantapa of Brihannayak's shrine and the Krishnapuram temple, even as he had fashioned out the Barabar caves, or the Romas Rishis in his tender boyhood, or when more youthful power was vouchsafed to him hewed out Ellora, Karli, Ajanta and Badami.

Not only do the above statements prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the original and early architecture in India was of wood, and was a close imitation of the Indian natural flora of the aboriginal hut, or the mountain cave or cavern hewed out by the hand of nature, but they also clearly demonstrate that the more permanent type of the same, namely, stone architecture, was also only an imitation of the wooden models, and was born from it as a child from the mother and continued to bear upon itself and still carries with it the birth-marks of its nativity. Instances can be multiplied almost without number how the Maya style, or that in which the stone plays the chief part, is only a copy of the Viswakarma style or that in which wood plays the chief part, and shrines belonging to the three chief branches of Hinduism, namely, Brahmanism or Brahmaisim, Buddhism and Jainism, can be cited as evidence from the Himalayas to Java and Bali, and from Dwaraka to Cochin China. Among these shrines, however, since Buddhism began to take earlier than the other two religions to erecting its

monuments and to chisel the shrines of its founder out of the more permanent material, namely, stone, it is no wonder that the earliest stone monuments in India are the work of the followers of the Buddha, who had also the peculiar fortune to reckon as one of themselves one of the greatest if not the greatest king of Ancient India, namely, Asoka, who was to their religion what St. Paul and Constantine combined were to early Christianity. But, however, early and excellent the stone work of the Buddhists may be, still one cannot disguise the fact that the chief and holiest symbols of its faith are only taken from the common stone house of these three religions, and chiefly so from their parent, which for convenience sake we shall designate as Hinduism, *i.e.*, the religion which existed in India before these three schismatic movements took place from it, namely, Brahmaism (Brahmanism), Jainism and Buddhism. Among these three schisms Brahmanism was the oldest, Jainism came next and the religion of the Tathagatha last, though it became the more vigorous and had the greatest spring and the largest expansiveness in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Buddhists revered as symbols the holy footprints of the master of wisdom, namely, the Buddha, the sacred seat seated on which under the Aswatha tree at Uruvula he conquered the daughters of Mara, and saw the enlightenment (Bodhi) the *mudra* of Dharma chakra Pravartana, or the turning of the wheel of Law which he accomplished at Mrigadava at Saranath, and finally the seat, or the chita structured on which between the two sala trees, he terminated his cycle of earthly existences (*samsarachakra*), and entered the *parenirvana*. All these four symbols are also found in Hinduism in its modern descendant, namely, Brahmanism, which as became the eldest son inherited most of the characteristics of its parent, the original Hinduism, from which branched off also Jainism and Buddhism. Here every Hindu is as familiar with the sacred feet of Vishnu (*Vishnupadas*) which are revered at Gaya and elsewhere, as with the footprints of the Tathagatha. The sacred Aswatha, seated under which the Gautama Buddha sought enlightenment is only a Buddhistic analogy of the sacred Aswatha tree, seated under which the pious fathers (*Pitris*) drink the soma in Heaven (*swarga*), and under which the *Pinda* is offered to them even to-day at Gaya *Sraddha* by the Brahman, as well as by other caste Hindus. Probably the origin of fire from the Aswatha wood, and its place in the Brahmanic ritual of sacrifice, suggested to the Buddha the origin of the spark of wisdom which illuminated him from under the shade of that sacred tree, which according to the Brahmanic tradition is *Agni garbha* or *Vahniyoni*. No doubt Brahmanas at least must be familiar with the holy uses of that tree in their own religious and domestic rituals, as well as with the celebrated opening verses of the 15th Chapter of the *Gita* (*Bhagavat*) wherein that sacred tree is again brought forward as an analogy of wisdom or divine knowledge (*chandamsi yarya parnani*, etc.). The Dharma-

chakra of the Buddhist again is only a copy of the Brahmanic Vishnuchakra or the Kalachakra, a symbolism derived from the solar disc, and its Pravartana mudra nothing more than the chit (jnana or knowledge) mudra of the Brahman. Buddha as a holy teacher, or as he later on became Prajna Paramitha, is only a duplicate of the Brahmanic teacher or guru of wisdom Dakshinamurti. As for the sacredness of the *chita* or the funeral pyre, the Brahman did not attach any importance to it, as according to him the mortal body of even the holiest of his teachers was only a cast of garment and was after the vital spark had fled of no more importance than a torn rag (*cf.* Gita. *vasamsi giranni, aetha vhaaya*, etc.). So he attached no importance to this mortal or perishable vesture, though among the non-Aryans and other aborigines of India it had a sacredness bordering on that with which the Buddhists venerated it. Instances might be multiplied, and even in the Ramayana chaitya and *chita* are considered as sacred, or they became so later on in the Jatakas; and lastly, concerning the couch reclining on which the Buddha entered the Pannervana between the two sala trees, we find in Brahmanism also its prototype, namely, Vishnu lying cradled as an eternal infant, floating as he does on a Banyan leaf (*Vatapatra*) and altar, resting whereon he is in his yogic trance of sleep. Not to stop with these analogies, the Buddhists borrowed wholesale their mythology, their conceptions of heaven, hell, and a metempsychosis, as well as even several of their most important Jataka stories, from the Hindu storehouse, with the result that to anybody who studies the two religions side by side and observes their practices, Buddhism appears as no more different from Brahmanism than Protestantism from Catholicism or the Greek church, and the Brahmanas put the final touch to this process of synthetic analogy by declaring that Buddha himself was one of the Avatars of their favourite God Vishnu, in their Bhagavata, Vishnu, Brahmanda and Brahmapuranas! In Bengal Jayadeve imbibed from this his traditional source, his ideas concerning the Dasavatars, made Vishnu bear the Buddha sarira, etc., the (*cf.* Ashtapati or the opening verses), and take birth so as to put a stop to the unnecessary slaughter of cattle (*Pasughatam*) on the pretence of sacrifice, and the irony is carried further by the modern Hindus, and especially by the Pandas who put the Hindu caste-marks on Buddha figures and worship them as Vishnu!

Now we will pass on from the achievements of the Buddhists in the field of early Indian art, and especially architecture, to the achievements of their brothers, the Hindus (Brahmans and other caste Hindus) and the Jainas. Among these by far the largest number of monuments belong to the Hindus, who either erected them themselves or ousted others like the Jains and the Buddhists from them and established their own images in their garbha grihas. Instances are

not wanting concerning this forcible conversion of Jaina and Buddha buildings to Brahmanic uses, and specially in South India did that process go on at a rapid pace. Jalugumalai mudra and Kanchipuram are only a few instances to illustrate our point and many more were originally only Jaina or Buddha fanes, and the Hindus where they overcame these people, either by religious intimidation or absorption, found little difficulty in installing a Linga or a figure of Vishnu in the place where there had been a Buddha or a Jaina like Nemintha or Parswantha, or in several cases (but mostly in the Buddhist ones) re-chiselling the image itself into the shape of a Hindu divinity, or simplifying the process of Shuddhi still further by giving Hindu caste-marks to and clothing Buddha in the vesture and the ornaments that become a Hindu or Brahmanic deity !

Now taking these Hindu buildings, we find that the earliest do not go back generally beyond the 6th or the 7th century A.D. and from this period the Jaina and the Hindu buildings in stone begin to multiply in India with a rapidity which can be compared only to the growth of tropical vegetation in the jungle parts of Malabar, Burma and Ceylon, and Buddhism driven across the borders is becoming slowly sucked in by the tentacled octopus of Hinduism, till Sankara and Kumarila gave it mortal wounds in the 8th and the 9th centuries, and the earlier Mohammeden invasions gave it the final deathblow. Still it continued to drag on a precarious existence in parts of Orissa, Berar, and elsewhere till the 16th century, when finally it bid a most unwilling good-bye to the land of its birth, to be found now only in further India, regions like Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, or the lands of its cultural conquests, Tibet, China, Mongolia, Manchuria, Korea, Japan, etc., or in Hither India, Ceylon, Burma and Cambodia or in the corners of Java and Bali and the Gunda islands.

When the ancient Hindus finally took or adopted stone building or Maya style (the first beginnings of it they had made in the days of Mahabharata in the palace of the Pandava princes at Indraprastha,) what do we find as their characteristic of architecture? True they can never but have a sneaking love and regard for their old Viswakarma style, style which the virgin forests of their country only too often tempted them to indulge in. But still, what was the peculiarity which the ancient Hindus gave to their types of architectural reactions, or what was their angle of vision and is even to-day? The Hindu like the Buddhist and the Jain is an idolater at heart, and however much we may mould and change him by foreign contact, or however much we may torture and persecute him or convert him either by self, fear or persuasion or all combined, either to Christianity or Islam, still one has only to scratch his skin, and there beneath it flows the blood of the idolater, of those who excavated the sculptures at Sanchi and Saranath or, of him who hewed out the Ardhanariswara at

Elephanta. Even when he is compelled by his foreign and iconoclastic masters to erect an architectural fane which would symbolise and proclaim worthily to the world all that a man can feel for a woman he loved, cherished and adored, he would not but transmute into that feeling the deep surging irresistible glow of Bhakti which coursed in his veins and in those of his ancestors ; and lo, when architecture was required, he could not but put his finger there and rear it on principles and love that guide the hands of one who uses his utmost God-given faculties to rear a most beautiful sculpture out of the most enchanting dream-visions of his innermost soul.

So we find that the genius of the Indian is for sculpture first and then only for architecture, and hence it is that in the earlier part of the paper we called the Indian sculpture the tree, the branches and fruits of which were architecture. Even fresco or bronze work is closely modelled on sculpture, and the name of painting itself in Sanskrit indicates its early sculptural origin (*cf.* Brown's Indian painting). So all forms of building or ornamental art being subordinated to sculpture or *silpa*, no wonder that whatever the Indian architect does he views it from the point of view of a sculptor (*śilpi*) first and then only from that of an architect (*sthapati*). Thus Indian architecture stands in sharp contrast to that of ancient Egypt, as well as to that of medieval Italy and France, and was produced in principles that guide the hands of a *silpi* rather than on those which ought to guide the hands of a *sthapati*. In ancient Egypt, and in medieval and modern Europe, taking such typical buildings as the Pyramids, the cathedrals at Amiens and Salisbury, as well as the Vatican and St. Paul's Cathedral, we find that these are architectural erections first, and that sculpture is used only for the purposes of ornamentations, or rather that it plays only a secondary rôle in the construction of these buildings, and would not have deprived them structurally of any importance or permanence even if sculpture had been entirely omitted. True, some of the masters who erected these fanes, especially those whose hands fashioned out the Amiens and the Salisbury cathedrals as well as the Vatican, were as great sculpturally as they were architecturally, and this can be no better illustrated than by a careful study of the front of Amiens' cathedral. Hence whenever these people evolved anything even of Sculpture, as with the Egyptians even, that sculpture had the massiveness, stability and the all-pervasive definite proportionate spirit of architecture, and was only sculpture by courtesy. Look at the sphinx and some of the huge statues of Rameses and other Egyptian kings that adorn the Egyptian gallery of the British Museum and the Louvre ! Do not these appear as architectural in their bold clear cut lines and majestic permanency as the Pyramids ? The Assyrians and the Babylonians were students of the Egyptians in their arts of Building, and so the same general rule can also be applied to them, with some modifications. The Medes and the Persians come

half way between their western neighbours the Assyrians and their eastern brother the Indian in that their best work partakes of the characteristics of both. The Egyptians evolved the design of their pillars, capitals and other architectural fanes and motive ornamentations, from the things that grew in their own country and which they closely observed and studied, for in their earlier days of their development they were as much the true children of nature as the Vedic Indians. They copied out the lotus, the lily, the papyrus, the palm, and the various water plants that grew in their country, and immortalised these ordinary plants in architectural creations, nay in pillar and capital. So also the Indians used the lotus and the lily and the cucumber in the earlier stages, and in the latter stages the various forms of the palm, the banana and the pineapple and the conch to immortalise their own creations.

K. N. SITARAM.

(Conclusion.)



Two Poems

THE PURDAH-WIFE BURNS INCENSE TO MOTHER DURGA

As the sweet-smelling smoke of the incense curls upward,
So does my heart with rapture expand.
It is I, Lilavati, thy daughter, Mai Durga ;
Bless this my house, O Heart of the Land !

Be the victory thine ! All my infinite longing,
Here in the home, the purdah behind,
Is to dwell, to pervade as an influence lustral,
Felt like the hearth-fire . . . pure, warm and kind.

And my cry is forever to keep my house holy,
Sacred and true and obedient my heart ;
To my husband and lord every hour dedicated.
Grant me, Mai Durga, this be my part.

And at last I will mount and follow him, suttee ;
Pure on the pyre amid incense and flame.
In these spirals of smoke I foretaste divine Smara.
Jai ! Durga ki jai ! Blest be thy name.

SESTINA

THE MIGRANT

The spirit bidding in me is a guest
That makes a visit oft-times to the Earth ;
When tired of eons spent in realms of space,
The birdling soul remembers it had rest
And shelter in the clay of human birth . . .
Brief incarnation for a nesting-place.

Whence comes my tenant-soul? What time or place
It last has visited cannot be guessed ;
Whether in rogue or saint it chose a berth,
What soul should greatly care? So small is Earth,
So sweet forgetfulness, so dear is rest,
Won hardly from the endless whirl of space.

O bird that lodges in me for a space,
Sometimes I catch a vision of the place
Where last you lodged . . . almost the secret wrest
That lies behind the veil of years unguessed . . .
A trail of journeying thro' all the Earth,
And many avatars from birth to birth.

What happens to you, soul, at each new birth ?
What makes you lose your lore of starry space ?
Why should the human contact of the Earth
Discharge all old experience, and place
An infant psyche in each infant guest ?
Must this be so, O bird, to give you rest ?

I think that is the answer. When for rest
My heart is fain, it finds no soother berth
Than haunts of childhood days. And so my guest
From out the constant swirl of boundless space,
Would fain renew its innocence . . . replace
Celestial knowledge with child-lore of Earth.

And yet, when Spring comes greening off the Earth,
And sap upsprays to sun, an old unrest
Fills all my being ; and the well-known place
Where I have lived and where I had my birth,
Grows irksome to me ; and the far-off space
Beyond me calls and claims me as a guest.

O migrant guest, once more wheel off from Earth.
Go seek in space, bright bird that wakes from rest,
With Spring's new birth, another natal place.

MAY FOLWELL HOISINGTON

WITH GERHART HAUPTMANN*

*(A literal translation from the German by Suhashini Nambiar by
his Secretary E. Hirschberg)*

If I am writing about the present intellectual life of Germany in response to an invitation from India, I am doing so with feelings of joyous gratitude. For in the chaotic darkness which governs all our war maladies and the present post-war sufferings of Germany, it is the clear and tranquil light from the East which comes to us, one of the few bright rays which quietens our overwrought feelings and warms our benumbed souls. Even if we are, perhaps not able to recover on the achievements of a foreign culture and must only depend on ourselves, we are, nevertheless, happy to be able to rest our chaotic feelings in the sublime quietude and clear profundity of Indian thought.

The Germany of to-day! A narrow conception, because we have really to go back to 1914 to see a great past being bound to a problematic future by a difficult and miserable present. But, however, a few German figures do strongly stand out above the ruins and remind their own people as well those of the other nations, of the duty and responsibilities of the German people.

The most popular, in a really beautiful sense, and a great national figure of the Germany of to-day is undoubtedly Gerhart Hauptmann (he was born in 1862), a beautiful, majestic and white-haired man, who is a hero to a great majority of the German youths—the personification of all German ideals.

Gerhart Hauptmann is the son of an innkeeper in Silesia, that Eastern territory of Germany which has for centuries suffered much for our Fatherland and which still to-day conceals a poor, worked-out and starving population which has to suffer much on account of the hostile attitude of the Poles on the Eastern frontiers. Gerhart Hauptmann loves this country and in his dramas,—which was for the German stage of 1880, a great event, he has put down an unforgettable memorial for its inhabitants, above all in the “Weavers” (the chief occupation of the Silesian people being weaving).

I do not intend giving a literary-historic account here. I want only to bring my memories, experiences and observations together and give as vivid a picture as possible. Gerhart Hauptmann I feel produces an effect above all by

[* A portrait of Gerhart Hauptmann, Germany's greatest living author, has appeared in one of the previous numbers of Shama'a—Ed.]

his personality which is extremely fascinating in its fulness and inner wealth. Whether one sees this tall figure in the large hall of his Silesian farm-house or outside in his woody park with its lofty trees or on the large expanse of the sands near the sea, we find it rising powerfully out above the surroundings. One feels that this head by its intellectual work must conceal a part of the whole world in itself. For Gerhart Hauptmann works unceasingly. He has an immense library, which it may be almost true to say, was being added to everyday. There is no field of intellectual work that he has not penetrated into, in truth, into the very depths. And so it is that he has latterly been spending a good deal of his time studying religious problems, purely historical and philosophical, and one can meet him very often with a volume of the Sayings of Gautama Buddha when out on his lonely walks. The results of this humorist-satyrist study are the "stories" from the "Utopian Archipelago" which have just appeared and the "Island of the Great Mothers or the Wonder of Ille des Dames."

Besides his highly-gifted philosophical tendencies, Gerhart Hauptmann possesses the humour and the healthy power of a Hans Sachs—a Martin Luther. He is not only a pure and genuine child of protestantism, but is also thoroughly conscious of it. In his plan of work, one can find something on Luther also. But of course he is just to every other tendency of thought, be it what it may. He is most interested in Catholicism and goes as much into a deep study of it as to give expression to its art. In his great Epic "Till Eulen Spiegel" on which Gerhart Hauptmann has been working for some years and which is to symbolise Germany, he has depicted the spirit of early Christendom, as it first came to Germany, throughout, in a very grand manner, just as it has been represented in the Gothic domes. In one part we see the composition of an inner dome with pillars, the pulpit and all the details of the highest Gothic art as cannot be more plastically described in words. And he who has seen the eyes of the poet resting on the reproduction of this stone-picture while he re-modelled this figure with the chisel of the spirit of his words, has received a deep and unforgettable impression of the secret work of genius.

On the whole, Gerhart Hauptmann works unceasingly. When he is out for a walk, he carries a scribbling book in which he jots down his experiences what he has read or thought. Often only really small sentences, an exclamation perhaps which, written very disorderly, are to be embodied in his works later on. Once he said without being asked "I have too much within me" but he conquers this quite easily for he says "I say to myself always, every morning one must begin quite afresh without thinking on the past or with thought of the future." He masters life in this way, both mentally and physically. He rides, drives, wanders about like a youth, swims, fences, takes exercise, throws the spear,

thereby gaining for himself a new elasticity and joy of work every day. He lives, *i.e.*, eats and sleeps regularly, in order to retain a healthy spirit and body.

It is in the evenings for the first time after the day's work is done that he goes in for wine which makes him a wonderful sociable, amiable and spirited companion and host. He becomes exciting as a listener and stimulating in his talk, for the responsibilities of the day are left behind, and he enjoys life in mutual conversation. It is delightful to hear Gerhart Hauptmann talk and then when he lifts his glass with kingly grace and relates some of his memories in a holiday mood or suggestively speaks of his future plans, one gets more than excited and begins enjoying life to the full extent with him.

He loves wine and is a little contemptuous of the anti-alcohol movement as seen in America, but he has respect enough to allow people to follow their own way. He himself went his own way very early in life. He began as a sculptor—and so the plastic strength of his images and portrayals—but felt himself wholly a poet. When he later on under the spell of Ibsen's dramas, wrote his early dramas "The Festival of Peace" and "The Lonely Human Beings," he found an enthusiastic following amongst the youngest. But one does not always want a poet to show the real life of the time and so he had to fight much with himself, the world around and with his material. He has till to-day a fighting nature, a sign of his never-tiring spirit. But he does not care for unfruitful battles. He marches on in thought and endeavour. "One ought never to want back what has been. One must always go forward. I do not pin myself down to any definite form, but only one ought never to go back to the old."

Thus it comes about that Gerhart Hauptmann has a great understanding for youth who love and honour him and come from all parts of the country to pay him homage. Whole schools and associations, single classes or small bands come singly or in groups and sing folk songs before his door and give him an ovation. They scramble for one look at him and are thankful for one kind word or autograph. For they feel that Gerhart Hauptmann represents and is a piece of Germany—of its intellectual spirit and its feelings. And when he in a long or short speech addresses the students, in prepared or unprepared words, he becomes young with them and plants in their hearts a seed of joy which must at some time bear fruit. He knows also that he carries certain responsibilities and is under obligation to his country and so he seldom avoids public homage which in truth robs him of much strength and gives it to the others instead. The fact that many circles had once thought of making Gerhart Hauptmann, President of the Republic, in order to give the people a worthy figure for hero-worship is easily explained by all that has been mentioned above. He is, as it were, created to inspire a crowd.

But in mixing with the individual, he is also amiable and kind. He is good and considerate, large-hearted like a prince. He is honest in the expression of his views and outspoken when it is necessary to represent truth.

With a congenial nature he is stimulating, listens and speaks in an appreciative and understanding manner and through his wealth of words changes the conversation to topics always new. It is an indescribable joy to be able to observe Gerhart Hauptmann in a society like a brave knight in the tournament of thoughts and a perfect cavalier in his behaviour towards women.

For Gerhart Hauptmann, the woman is the most living thing, the liberator, the inner-saving element. Ever since his school days he has always said "The one-sided education of man would have crushed me had it not been for the woman. It was undoubtedly the mother in her that stood me in good stead." And these words of his have remained till to-day, but of course just a little modified.

And when one speaks of Gerhart Hauptmann, one must not forget to mention his wife and what significance her personality has for Gerhart Hauptmann's work. Margarete Hauptmann a really musical, intellectual and sociable woman is his companion and co-worker in the noblest sense of the word. She is, to use a popular expression, his Muse the good spirit of his house. By being a source of inspiration and by her understanding, she guards her husband who, as a poet, has a wounded soul and therefore must be protected from the indelicate ways of the world.

E. HIRSCHBERG

Two Poems

THE GIANT

I was a giant. Golden streams
 Around my castles flowed.
I built huge towers with ivory tops.
 I flanked my city road.

With bulls and lions whose shining manes
 Dripped gold on their great paws.
I made two corkscrews, all of gold,
 And three gold jagged saws.

I should have made the rock-strewn sand
 Meet round my golden sea,
But Granny's hateful parlour-maid
 Has whisked my plate from me.

BILLY

Billy has an impish grin,
Bad and bold.
Billy's heart is full of sin,
He's four years old.

Things have gone from bad to worse.
Sad to say
He threw the bread-knife at his nurse
Yesterday.

"Suppose you'd hit her with the knife,
On the head ;
You might have taken nurse's life !"
Aunt Mary said.

"Supposing nurse had gone away,"
Said Uncle Paul,
"To live with God this very day,
For good and all.

Because of Billy's wicked sin
In acting so !"
"How *sorry* Billy would have been !"
Said Auntie Flo.

But was his stubborn spirit bent ?
No ! With a nod,
He answered, quite impenitent,
"I should—for God !"

SUSAN MILES

AVIMĀRAKA.

(Continued from Vol. V—No. 2)

BY K. RAMA PISHAROTI

ACT IV

(Then enter Māgadhika with the toilet case)

MĀGADHIKA

Ah, what careless maids ! The sun is up and they have not yet swept the palace ; they are not even heard chattering. What can it be ? ⁽¹⁾ Ah, she must have retired late last night and still sleeps (at dawn). I'll now wake the princess.

(Then enter Vilāsini with a fan)

VILĀSINI

Wait, Māgadhika, wait.

MĀGADHIKA

Ah friend, don't detain me. I am carrying flowers and jewellery to the princess.

VILĀSINI

Why, now, *jewellery* for the princess ? ⁽²⁾

MĀGADHIKA

Immodest girl, speak not such inauspicious words. May the princess be always adorned !

VILĀSINI

No indeed ! I am only saying that her form itself is an ornament to her.

MĀGADHIKA

Ignorance ! Do we not perfume even a flower ?

(¹) This prepares the audience for the announcement of the hurried forced flight of the prince.

(²) This shows that she knows that the prince has fled, but as the next speech makes clear, she does not want to tell Māgadhika about it.

VILĀSINI

Quite true. Beauty becomes more beautiful when adorned.

MĀGADHIKA

Friend ! our princess has, indeed, been united to one who is her equal in beauty.

VILĀSINI

Enough of partiality.⁽³⁾ Beside the prince the princess appears like the lotus-pond (by the side of the sun).

MĀGADHIKA

Well said. I doubt, however, if even Cupid incarnate could be like him.

VILĀSINI

And so it is that the princess is never happy when the prince is away even for a moment.

(Then enter Nalinika in tears)

NALINIKA

True, indeed, is the proverb — "Happiness never runs smooth." For this one year⁽⁴⁾ the princess has been enjoying continuous bliss ; and ourselves, her companions, have had an "Uttarakuru" life. Now, however, since the king has come to know of this affair, my body fails me. And the innocent princess, overcome by shame and fear and love appears as if dead through very sorrow. This palace, indeed, looks, I believe, like a lamp with its light extinguished. I know no remedy for the mind of the love-lorn princess, now separated from her beloved. That the prince has been able to get out safe is indeed some relief for the mind. Very well guarded now are the princess' quarters.

(Walking about)

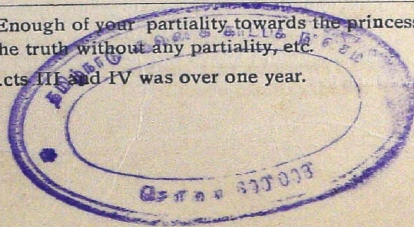
Ha ! here come my friends ! Here, Māgadhika, what's it ?

MĀGADHIKA

Friend, what do you mean ? Isn't it time for the princess' toilet ?

(3) This may be interpreted in two ways : (i) Enough of your partiality towards the princess : for it is the prince who makes her so beautiful and (ii) To speak the truth without any partiality, etc.

(4) This would show that the interval between Acts III and IV was over one year.



NALINIKA

The season of festivity is no more.

(*She cries*)

MĀGADHIKA⁽⁵⁾

What is this? a dream? speak, speak, let us share it.⁽⁶⁾

NALINIKA

The prince has gone.

BOTH

Hem !

NALINIKA

I could not bear to see the grief of the princess and so have come here.

MĀGADHIKA

It will be painful to see the princess in this state of hers, but we must go in and console her.

BOTH

So we must.

(*Exeunt*)

Interlude

(*Then enter Avimāraka*)

AVIMĀRAKA

(*Sadly*)

Thanks to whatever good luck still clings to me. I have in some way been able to escape from the princess' quarters safe and unhurt. But even now my *mind* does not return to me, does not care for me, being enchained by her.(1)

Alas! what, indeed, may be the state of Kurangi! Ashamed must she be because of the murmurs of the maids and terrified because of the close confinement by the king. And filled with tears at not seeing me, she must be

⁽⁵⁾ This reading is based on the local Manuscript. The Trivandrum edition reads *Ubhe*, but it cannot be right in the light of Vilasini's having known it—*vide* note 2.

⁽⁶⁾ This would suggest that the prince made his exit from the palace the preceding night. Hence there is to be supposed to have elapsed a few days between the interlude and the incident described in the main act—*vide* note 8.

swooning every night.⁽⁷⁾ What shall I do? (2) Ah, I see a remedy. She cares not for herself in her solicitude for me; and so I too shall for her sake sacrifice my life. (*He paces restlessly.*) It is just a few days⁽⁸⁾ since I am separated from her, but intolerable appears to me my sorrow of body and mind. Here indeed: from her who is so fair, so young and so handsome and who sincerely loves me in greater and greater measure the more she knows me—from her have I been separated and still I continue to live (exist another moment). Forsaken indeed, am I. For, what else is there worse than ingratitude? ⁽⁹⁾ (3) Now, indeed, the benign lord, the thousand-rayed sun has begun to reduce me to ashes who have already been consumed by Cupid. (*Looks around.*) How terrible, alas, is the heat! Here now—her strength is tried by the heat (the sun's rays), and the Earth is very hot as if in a fever. Because of the forest fire, the trees have become void of all shade and appear as if stricken with consumption. The mountains with their mouths of caves aloft are as if roaring in helplessness.⁽¹⁰⁾ And this world itself with its consciousness lost, being cooked in the sun, goes as if into a swoon.⁽⁴⁾ What, now, shall I do? unable am I to proceed further. For, the fierce winds besmear with the fire a dust of sand. The trees with their dry leaves cause sweating. The body of the sun, melted by the forest fire, seems itself to flow down. And the world, shaken by the heat of the sun, seems abursting.⁽¹¹⁾ (5) Ah dearest! Ah fairest! Give me a word in reply. (*Falls down in a swoon. He wakes, sighing and looking up.*) Ha! The benign sun, the thousand-rayed lord, is hidden by the clouds. Or what's there to be wondered at if the scattered clouds, driven by winds do hide the sun? If indeed they hide that⁽¹²⁾ which is in my heart, then that may indeed be wonderful.⁽⁶⁾ Enough of this living death; I shall abandon my life. (*Rising up, walks about.*) What, indeed, shall I do!⁽¹³⁾ Well, I see: in yonder sylvan lake shall I abandon my life. Fie upon this: sinful is this my choice of death. Alas I have forgotten the noble path in my pride and confusion. I'll try another way. Looking not far off do I see a forest fire. Unto that shall I make an offering of my life. (*Approaching and bowing down.*) Benign Agni! If Agni can grant the desires of a devoted couple, may she who is always thinking of me be my beloved

(7) Sorrow naturally becomes more unbearable at night.

(8) This shows that some days have elapsed since his flight from the palace—*vide* note 6.

(9) This interpretation is based on the reading—*bhāvāt* for *bhāvah*, though such reading is not supported by any Manuscript. But yet the reading has been accepted because of its merit.

(10) A victim to consumption, the features of the man are completely changed. Here is a picture of disease and death all round and people wailing in helplessness.

(11) The root of *phalati* is *phalā-vīśarane*.

(12) That is, the sun in my heart. Mental anguish is supposed to produce heat and hence is compared to the sun.

(13) It means: What shall I do to end my life.

in my next life also.(7) (*Entering the fire and wondering.*) What may this be? The trees fall down burnt by clouds of sparks; but to me the flames are cool as the paste made of Malaya sandal. Indeed Agni shows great kindness unto the love-lorn and gladly embraces me as a father would his son.(8) Ha! What's there more wonderful—*Agni does not burn me!* Or there may be a reason for this also.(14) So I'll try another way. (*Paces up and down.*) Here is, indeed, a big mountain. Merged in dark clouds his peaks are lost in doubt. He forms an abode of rest for the hosts of sky-rangers. He is as variegated as the mind of the great poet, and becomes charming in the company of the sun. Yet does he stand, like an exiled king in utter uselessness.(15)(9) Well, I shall abandon my life on this mountain. *Marut-Prapātā*(16) is, indeed, an accomplisher of all desires. I'll now ascend. (*Ascending and looking.*) In this mountain-pool shall I bathe and after offering waters shall I chant the *Mantras*. (*He chants the Mantras.*)

(*Then enter a Vidyādhara with his beloved*)

VIDYĀDHARA

The dawn was spent in Uttarakurus⁽¹⁷⁾ and then we bathed in Manasa lake. Then again our youth was enjoyed in the Valleys of the caves of the Mandara mountains. To divert ourselves we explored the cave of the Himalayas and our eyes were satiated. And now are we proceeding to the Sandal trees of the Malaya mountains, which offer the pleasures of a noonday sleep.(10) (*Observing their passage through the sky.*) See, Saudāmani, see how beautiful does the divine Earth look from this distance. Here, indeed: the lordly mountains look like elephants and oceans like pools for sporting. The trees resemble water-weeds and the low lands appear hidden away. The rivers are like *Simantas*⁽¹⁸⁾ and big mansions mere dots. Here is seen the whole universe in a nutshell appearing topsy-turvy.(11) Bear up, dear, we are fast approaching the Malaya mountain, the abode of cool sandal.

(14) The reason, as will be clear later on, is that Avimāraka is the child of Agni; but he himself is not aware of it.

(15) Here is an implied *śleṣa* thrown out by the general sense and tenor of the verse. Thus the exiled king has his greatness obscured; he offers sweet welcome to the great; his mind has wonderful capacities and he is charming to his friends; but yet because he is exiled he is incapable of doing any good to anybody, secondly the comparison is exceedingly befitting because the speaker himself is such an exile.

(16) *Marut-Prapātā* is a form of self-immolation where the victim, when tired of life, throws himself down into the lap of air from a giddy height.

(17) It is conceived to be the seat of bliss and happiness, and favourably compares with the land of the lotus-eaters.

(18) It means the parting in a woman's hair.

SAUDĀMANI

Sire, so be it. (*Both observe their passage through the sky.*)

SAUDĀMANI

Sire, I must rest a while before going further.

VIDYĀDHARA

Well, then, we shall rest for a while on some peak and then proceed.

SAUDĀMANI

Sire, that would be good.

(*Both descend*)

VIDYĀDHARA

See, Saudāmani, see! In our speed, the host of clouds seems to forsake us, and the ocean-girdled Earth seems to quickly approach us. And these trees, like clouds in rainy season quickly shine looming large. (12) (*Getting down.*)⁽¹⁹⁾

Saudāmani, it is ours to receive a sixth of the flowers of the trees. Let us, therefore, free the trees from their obligation.

SAUDĀMANI

Yes, Sire, let us. (*They collect flowers.*)

VIDYĀDHARA

(*Seeing Avimāraka*)

Ah, who can this be? Well, I see. He must indeed be a Vidyādhara exiled for his wrong *Mantra*. For, such features are indeed never those of another. It is fortunate I have seen him. Well, I'll ask him his forgotten past.

AVIMĀRAKA

I have finished my prayer, now shall I throw myself down. (*Looks around and sees Vidyādhara.*) Ah, who can this be? or can it be a dream! But I am not asleep. Ah, men are said to see something when their end is near. It must be that. But that is only for the ignorant; I know everything. So then I'll enquire of him. Ho! which race and ancient family do you grace?

VIDYĀDHARA

Listen. I am a Vidyādhara, named Mēghanāda; and this is my lady, Saudāmani by name. The Vidyādharas are now celebrating a festival in the

⁽¹⁹⁾ The prose following the verse and Saudāmani's speech are omitted in our Manuscripts; and instead they read *Avatirya*.

Malaya mountain to propitiate Agastya. There are we bound. To rest for a while have we got down here. That is our story. Now why do you, Sire, convert the earth into heaven.

AVIMĀRAKA

(To himself)

What shall I say ? My end is near and I must not, therefore, utter a lie.

(Aloud)

I am Avimāraka, son of King Sanvira.

VIDYĀDHARA

It is false. These features are not human. *(Aloud.)* Why, now, have you come here all alone ?

AVIMĀRAKA

(To himself)

What, indeed, shall I say ?

(Stands bowing low his head)

VIDYĀDHARA

Well I'll myself know it. *(Repeats the Vidyā.)* Alas ! What a pity ! He is, indeed, the son of *Agni*, but does not himself know it. He loves Kurangi, the daughter of Kuntibhōja, and while he has been enjoying himself there, he has been discovered. He then escaped and finding it difficult to get in again he has ascended this mountain with a desire to offer himself an oblation to air. And there she is suffering a living death. I'll befriend him in that affair. *(Aloud.)* Ho ! Avimāraka ! Sincerity is the test of friendship. Thou canst not hide from me what I already know.

AVIMĀRAKA

Speak on.

VIDYĀDHARA

Henceforward let there be friendship between us. I know all your affairs. Have you not come desirous of destroying your life ?

AVIMĀRAKA

Yes, I have.

VIDYĀDHARA

Ah ! I am glad you have confided in me. If there be a means to enter there unknown, what wouldst thou do ?

AVIMĀRAKA

(Joyfully)

What else ; I will enter. That, indeed, has been the cause of all this distraction.

VIDYĀDHARA

Well, then, friend, look at this ring.

(Shows the ring) ⁽²⁰⁾

AVIMĀRAKA

Friend, of what use is it ?

VIDYĀDHARA

Who wears it on his right hand becomes invisible ; but on the left hand regains his old self.

AVIMĀRAKA

Friend, is it even so ?

VIDYĀDHARA

I will convince you. Friend, do you see me ?

AVIMĀRAKA

Yes.

VIDYĀDHARA

Watch !

AVIMĀRAKA

Yes, I'm watching.

VIDYĀDHARA

(Wearing it on the ring finger of his right hand)

Friend, do you see me ?

⁽²⁰⁾ This stage direction is not found in the local Manuscripts.

AVIMĀRAKA

Friend ! Not even a trace of you is seen, much less your body ! Those, indeed, are the happiest in the world who stroll about the sky accompanied by their beloved, who enjoy themselves in the Valleys of the mountains, who know everything, through *Mantras* because of their greatness and who wander about as they please hiding and manifesting themselves.(13) Good ; thanks to this. I seem to have already entered there.

VIDYĀDHARA

(Wearing it on his left hand)

So, then, receive this ring.

AVIMĀRAKA

(Taking the ring)

Blessed am I.

VIDYĀDHARA

No, no. I am blessed. For, a good man is glad not so much to receive a jewel as to give it unto another who longs for it.(14)

AVIMĀRAKA

I have but one doubt. But it is rather awkward to request that it may be tested on me.

VIDYĀDHARA

Well then, wear it on your right hand.

AVIMĀRAKA

Good.

(Wears the ring on the right hand)

VIDYĀDHARA

Friend, take this sword.

AVIMĀRAKA

So be it. *(Receiving the sword and wondering.)*

Ah ! the greatness of the sword ! Can it be the thunderbolt somehow hidden, or the tongues of lightning fused into a sword ? It scorns the fiery lustre of the sun and the forest quickly catches fire.(15)

VIDYĀDHARA

Ah, the spiritedness of Agni's son ! Few even among Vidyādharaś can withstand its fiery lustre. The benign lord Agni himself protects him.

AVIMĀRAKA

(Looking at the sword)

How wonderful is the greatness of the benign Vidyās ! To attributes divine have I now attained. Thanks to these qualities, I have become what I have been only in name. My body does exist even when it is not known to the vulgar host.(16)

Friend, my object is gained. Take back the sword.

VIDYĀDHARA

As you please. Friend, the rule is that the person touching the invisible person, as also the person touching the former are both invisible.

AVIMĀRAKA

Friend, very glad am I. It is prosperity on prosperity. Friend, I am afraid thou art long delayed on my account. Let there be no more delay.

VIDYĀDHARA

I am only waiting to take leave.

AVIMĀRAKA

Why speak much ?⁽²¹⁾ How can one like myself ever hope to requite people like you who are masters of *Vidyās*. By giving me my life, you have purchased me. You have only to order and your servant shall obey.(17)

VIDYĀDHARA

Well, I know the sincerity of your heart. If, indeed, you will do as I desire,——.

Speak of me and of this lady unto her, my friend ; and think of me now and then and behold this my flight. Gladden the princess by the arts of love. Remember, again, I am by your side when you are in difficulties. Ah for his greatness ! My mind does not want to bid him good-bye. Friend, we will then take leave.

⁽²¹⁾ The original appears very much like the translation of the Malayalam idiom *entinadhikam paravanu*. Further, such constructions are not rare. The writer believes that these are another test of the work being a Malabar production.

AVIMĀRAKA

Till we meet again.

VIDYĀDHARA

So be it.

(Vidyādhara and his companion arise)

AVIMĀRAKA

(Looking up)

Ho! Here is the worthy Sir, Mēghanāda, plunged into the aerial ocean. He has his hair blown about by the winds; the colour on his body washed away by being rubbed against the watery clouds; his sword securely kept in his armpit; his waist hidden, being encircled by the hands of his beloved; his upper cloth wafted in the breeze; and the wreath of gems on his coronet putting to shame the stars. Such is the benign Vidyādhara and he goes gradually disappearing through the speed of his upward flight.⁽¹⁹⁾ She also, thanks to her *Vidyā*, follows her lover. And she—her side-locks untied and hanging loose through speed, her body bowed down with the weight of her breasts, the upper part (of her body) resting on her lover—thus is she seen and lost to view like lightning amidst clouds.⁽²⁰⁾ Gone is the worthy Sire Mēghanāda; and I too shall now go to the city; so I'll descend. *(Getting down.)* I feel tired and I'll rest here on this stony for a while before I proceed. *(Sits down.)*

(Then enter Vidūṣaka)

VIDŪṢAKA

Ah alas, for the misfortune of the worthy Sire, King Sauvira! Long was he childless and then through his fastings and prayers and the grace of the gods, he was given a noble son, the like of whom was rare in this mortal world. But even now he has become childless. Alas for the death of my unfortunate self and the misfortune of friends, the prince is exiled. *(Walking about.)* Now the worthy lady tells me that the prince has gone in safety. But who knows he is well—he who is born a prince, who is tender and delicate and who now is love-lorn and solitary and in exile? I will now wander about the whole earth till I see the prince or the prince's body. If I don't see him, I shall become his friend in the other world.⁽²²⁾ I feel, indeed, tired. I'll, therefore, rest for a while under the shade of this tree and then go on.

(He sleeps)

⁽²²⁾ It means he will commit suicide. The faithfulness and devotion of Vidūṣaka are exceedingly touching.

AVIMĀRAKA

What can indeed be the state of Santuṣṭa.⁽²³⁾ It is well if the Brahmin has heard of my exit ; if not, he will be in danger. Why, enough of all my enterprises without him. He is, indeed, laughter in company, soldier in battle, adviser in sorrow, terror to his enemies and the delight of my heart. But why speak much. My body seems to be divided in twain.(21)

(Looking all around)

Who can, indeed, be this traveller sleeping in the tree-shade.

(Approaching)

Great is my luck thus to meet him accidentally. My mind longs to embrace him.

VIDŪṢAKA

(Waking up)

Long have I slept. I'll now proceed. What rest can there be for disappointed minds ?

(Walking about and seeing Avimāraka)

How now my worthy Sire, Avimāraka !

AVIMĀRAKA

Ha ! My friend, Santuṣṭa !

(They embrace each other)

VIDŪṢAKA

(Laughing aloud)

Tell me, friend, tell me—what have you been doing all this while ?

AVIMĀRAKA

Thus did I.

(He wears the ring on the right hand and disappears)

VIDŪṢAKA

Ha ! Ha ! where, where, indeed, is my worthy Sire ? why is he not seen ? Ah, because I have long been thinking of him, I only seem to have seen him ! or I will clear it up. Oh, friend, I will curse you with a curse, if you hide yourself.

(²³) Santuṣṭa is the name of Vidūṣaka.

AVIMĀRAKA

I am here, friend.

VIDŪṢAKA

Where, where art thou ?

AVIMĀRAKA

(*Wearing the ring on his left hand*)

Friend, I am here.

VIDŪṢAKA

At first thou wert simple Avimāraka, but now thou art Avimāraka, the *Māyāvin*. Thus thou art the master of Māya. Why, then, dost thou not hide thyself and enter the princess' quarters.

AVIMĀRAKA

You simpleton, I got it only just now.

VIDŪṢAKA

Wonderful, wonderful ! whence now did you get it ?

AVIMĀRAKA

I'll tell you all about it when we are in the palace of the princess.

VIDŪṢAKA

Are you not hungry now ?

AVIMĀRAKA

Come quick ; let us enter the place where the treasure is. Don't let go my hand.

VIDŪṢAKA

Wonderful, wonderful ! I too am invisible. Does my body exist or does it not exist ? I'll sound myself *thu, thu !*

AVIMĀRAKA

Enough, enough of this delay. My mind is in eager haste to see my beloved.

VIDŪṢAKA

But I have no interest.

AVIMĀRAKA

Ha! let us be in time for a meal.

VIDŪṢAKA

Let us rest for a while before setting out.

AVIMĀRAKA

But is not Kurangi fritting over me?

VIDŪṢAKA

But is she really alive, the naked, blind Sramaṇikā? ⁽²⁴⁾

AVIMĀRAKA

Friend, I do beg of thee: come soon.

VIDŪṢAKA

Why art thou in a hurry like a Brahmin who has finished his *samavartanam*? ⁽²⁵⁾

AVIMĀRAKA

Come, this way.

(Dragging him)

VIDŪṢAKA

Please don't pull at me. I am following fast behind you.

AVIMĀRAKA

(Walking about)

Here are the city gates.

VIDŪṢAKA

I see the beauties of the town.

AVIMĀRAKA

These are the royal quarters: These royal quarters I once entered at night in fear, goaded on by rashness. Now, indeed, do I cleverly and helped by

⁽²⁴⁾ The Vidūṣaka is joking at the expense of the heroine.

⁽²⁵⁾ Here is again a very clear and direct reference to Kerala. During the period of *Brahma cārihood*, he must live a very rigorous religious life, so much so he wants to be freed of it and so impatiently awaits the end of the year. In the case of *Nambudiris* this celebrate period is restricted to one year, unlike that of other Brahmins elsewhere. The Similie becomes beautiful only if a *Nambudiri brahma cāri* is kept in view.

Māya enter the same, fearlessly in broad daylight as the learned man does the company of good men.(22)

(*Walking about*)

Kurangi must now have had her bath and must be in her apartments.

VIDŪṢAKA

Wherever it may be, let us enter. It is time for food.

AVIMĀRAKA

Come let us go into the inner apartments.

(*All exeunt*)

ACT IV ⁽²⁶⁾

(²⁶) This act is known as "*Parvakamkam*."



CHITTARANJAN DAS.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

CHITTARANJAN DAS

The late Chittaranjan Das was also a poet of renown. He wrote in Bengali, his mother-tongue and was therefore not much heard of as a poet except in Bengal. Of the works translated into English, his *Sagar-Sangit* or *Songs of the Sea* perhaps is best known outside Bengal. This is a collection of beautiful songs translated by the author himself into English and rendered into English verse by Sri Aurobindo Ghose. The following are two of the Songs :—

SONGS OF THE SEA

*WHEN have I seen thee, clasped thy hand,
Gazed into thine eyes !
In what distant time ? In what forgotten land ?
Did I speak to thee then ? What song didst thou sing to me,
And smiling looked into my face ?
Then was the heart so full to overflowing
With tears unshed of the deepest passion ?
Then did the depths of my heart throb
With such thought, such grief, such sobbing strains ?
Then didst thou clasp me to thy bosom
With close-encircling arms
Like a friend full of deepest affection ?
Did all thy thoughts then flow into my heart
Led by love's sweet mantras ?
All I remember not, but only this,
In some dim past age and distant clime
I know thee, I know thee,
My heart felt thee, O Friend !*

*And because thy touch is awake in my mind,
I float out to thee in the present times !
I think to-day in some strange, secret trysting-place
We two shall meet at last
And each other recognize !
And in some enchanted space
Of half-light and half-darkness
All that old love of ours
Will awaken again !*

The portrait of **Chittaranjan Das**, which appears in this number, has been very kindly lent to us by the Editor, "*Modern Review*," Calcutta.

OUR FRONTISPIECE

"Arjuna and Urvashi"

"Arjuna and Urvashi" is reproduced from a large collection of paintings by the late Andhra artist Damerla Ram Rao. He painted it in 1924 and it was sold in Bombay in 1925. It is one of his famous pictures. We thank the Editor, *"Kala"*—a Telegu Art Journal—for allowing us the use of this picture-block.

WORKING-CLASS ART

The proletarian motif has introduced a new psychological element into art. Artistic substance becomes imbued with a freshness and a universality that classical art could never attain. The interwoven dependence of one form of life upon another, the collective unity of the human race, becomes a reality pregnant with esthetic as well as social significance. The distinction of caste, a vestigial characteristic of contemporary civilization, is already fading with the progress of the proletarian concept. In clear and definite contrast, bourgeois concepts are starting to shake and totter as the civilization which created them is gradually approaching its destruction. The uncertainties and irrational strangeness of modern art, the wild, frenetic and unrhythmical flow of line, colour and verse, the distortionate visions of the modern mystic, are all unequivocal manifestations of the moribund state of the prevailing bourgeois society and culture. The febrile revolt against the slavishly acquisitive economics of the bourgeois system, its hypocrisies of political principle, its stultifying puritanic ethics, headed by a wing of the bourgeois itself, men sick with the ennui of inadequacy and unredeeming failure, as well as the fogleman of the proletariat, is further illustration of just how this trend is shaping itself in literature and philosophy. The superficiality of this anti-bourgeois criticism, fostered in America by men like Mencken and Babbitt, does not obscure its importance as an index to our social disintegration. It is no less signal than the cry of the small bourgeois, caught in the vice of a rapidly centralizing society, against the oppression of their rights and the usurpation of their enterprise by the higher strata of their own class. All point inevitably in the same direction.

"Hatred of the bourgeoisie is the beginning of virtue," the Flaubertian proclamation of the nineteenth century, vigorously expresses the rebellious attitude of at least two generations. With the present generation the meaning of the proclamation has become more clarified; social concentration has given it a more crystallized form, a sharp, forceful definiteness, and an expression clearer if not more refined, subtler if not more powerful. Professor Sherman, the W. D. Howells of our generation, in his essay *"The National Genius,"* has contended that contemporary divergences from the bourgeois conceptions are but the manifestations of a recalcitrant youth—futile "bucking of the National genius." This is a blind and shallow evasion. The violent anti-bourgeois attack of men like Dreiser and Anderson in America, Joyce in Ireland, Verhaeren in Belgium, Toller in Germany, not to mention a host of others, does not express the vaporous eccentricity of the immature or the undefined aspirations of the Utopian. There is a social consciousness, imperceptible perhaps to the artists themselves, present in the works of these men that is more moving than the anæmic art of the fading bourgeois. The soft, purring music of an Emily Dickinson could no more express the spirit of our age than the staccato rhythms, the vivid literalities, the rhymeless clamorings of a Sandburg could have expressed the attitude of hers. The Lizette Reeses, gentle, one-stringed artists of an evanescent *genre*, are retreating before the rushing cadences of a changing civilization.

It is not the function of a critic to declare the poetry of a Lizette Reese infinitesimal in value because it is unsucculent of the spirit of the rising generation, but to point out that it should be studied in relation to its own class, of which it is a part, and evaluated in accordance with the type of art it

represents. But it is as visibly fallacious of the Shermans to maintain that we must cling to this type of lyricism, this moody sequestration of impulse and vain shadowing of reality, as it was of Rousseau to argue that salvation was to be secured only by a return to the primeval. However, it is true that every state of society must have its conservative, "reminiscent" element, devoted to a perpetuation of the *status quo*, with an additional craving for the "finer" gold of yesterday, and Professor Sherman, with his compeers, Professors Moore and Babbitt, are but a vital exemplification of this attitude. No matter how inevitable, this approach is a viscerously undermining influence. It is far more to be deplored than the sciolistic strictures of a Henry Mencken or the vorticistic ejaculations of an Ezra Pound. Yet it is this polluted type of criticism that is propagated by our educators throughout the country, in the institutions of California, the Mid-West and the fringe of the Atlantic. In fact, it is devastatingly ubiquitous.

It is only the birth of a literature which represents the proletarian concept that gives promise of an enduring opposition. The poetry of Sandburg and Masters, the dramas of Eugene O'Neill, the fiction of Anderson, Dreiser and to an extent that of Willa Cather and Sinclair Lewis, are evidences of this new trend. Whitman was perhaps the first to voice it in America, and Frank Norris, Stephen Crane and to a lesser degree Graham Phillips were its continuators. Since the war it has had a rapid, intensively poignant growth.

It is at this point that we must indicate more exactly the features of the proletarian concept as distinct from the bourgeois and aristocratic. We discover with proletarian art the growth of a new esthetics. The clash of class-psychologies has precipitated a revolution in art values and criteria. In literature, for instance, the workingman, as distinguished from the noble, the merchant and the *magister*, becomes a figure essential to its evolution; tragedies formerly spun about the epicodic futilities of royalty, the failures of gamblers and business men, now include the disasters of the proletariat. The proletarian is visualized as no less a hero than the knight or financier. The ethics of the bourgeois, by the very process of social antithesis, so adequately illustrated by Hegel and Plechanoff, are repudiated by the evolving proletariat. *Virtues like honesty and chastity, denuded of their verbal veneer and deceptive duality of application, no longer become the embodiment of greatness in character and the source of profound emotional appeal.* The novels of Flaubert, Zola, Hamsun, Anderson, Dreiser, Willa Cather, all have successfully abandoned such *motifs*. The esthetic apotheosis of such virtues belonged to the day of the bourgeois novel, the day of "*The Scarlet Letter*" and Adam Blair. The attitude toward the whole problem of sex, in line with the same trend of social antithesis, has become unfettered of bourgeois prejudice and is seeking out toward a more living and comprehensive expression. The sermonical novel, so dominant and widely in vogue during the heyday of the Victorians, with the rise of the proletariat has become obsolescent. The bourgeois attitude toward the obliquities and perversities of human action, the reverse of intelligent and generous, becomes understandable and magnanimous when transformed into the proletarian.¹ Crime is conceived as a product of conditions and not of the innate wickedness of human nature. Condemnation is turned into pity, and punishment into treatment.² A Draco becomes a Ferri, and a judge becomes a physician. Evil in characters is

¹ This does not mean that certain exigencies do not demand rigid, often brutal, tactics of an uncrystallized proletariat, but that the understanding and magnanimity noted are the necessary social consequents of the approaching change in our economic structure. The temporary defection from such an attitude, occasioned by a political revolution or economic emergency, in this stage of social evolution, is no argument against the reality of the trend and the unmistakable nature of its final direction.

² See Ferri's *Criminal Sociology*; Blatchford's *Not Guilty*; V. F. Calverton's *Morals and Determinism*.

In Whitman there remained but few of the vestiges of the earlier concept, and these too are passing with the intensification of the proletariat and the gradual refinement of proletarian art. In Germany and Russia the plunge into the new art has been preternaturally violent and rapid. At times this art has possessed a ferocity verging on madness. Toller, Hasenclever, Liebedinsky—these are its stars. But they are its promise, not its fulfilment.

V. F. CALVERTON,
Editor, The Modern Quarterly.

THE MUSIC OF THE ANCIENTS AS AN INSPIRATION TO MODERNS

Confucius, the great Chinese legislator and philosopher, was quoted by one of his biographers as having said: "I only hand on; I cannot create new things. I believe in the ancients and therefore I love them." These words ring truer to western ears, now that the unearthing of the treasures of ancient civilizations brings to light the fact that a great many modern inventions, flying machines included, were known to the Asiatic nations of old, and later forgotten; that, furthermore, the arts of these races were in many respects reaching a stage of excellence far above our present standards. This is evident as far as plastic arts are concerned; and the canons of proportion used in Egypt and Greece are still copied, though in a distorted manner, to suit modern requirements. Curiously enough, alone of all arts, music appears to most westerners as a new art, having no roots in the past, no canon to give it a sort of permanent foundation. This conception, however, is utterly false, and numerous evidences may be found to disprove it.

THE ANCIENT SYSTEM

The ancients had a very profound and complex system of music; and this system was based on a canon of proportion found in the very essence of the musical element, *viz.*, sound. But music is an illusive art. Stones persist; even paintings may be preserved to tell the tale of ancient splendors. Of music nothing remains, but the instruments on which it was performed, and theoretical books. Worse still, few people take the trouble to ask from old instruments their secrets, and the ancient books are rare and, when found, difficult to understand, as they were written in symbols. This was done because music of old was considered as a great power susceptible of being used for the production of far-reaching phenomena. Music was a sacred function in the community; and harmony, the complete system of understanding of music and of more than music, was a secret type of knowledge. A few old manuscripts where the ancient system of music is given out under the veil of allegorical symbolism, are said to be still in existence in India, but remain hidden in the homes of old families, which apparently keep them as priceless treasures far from the hands of the westerners.

A CANON OF PROPORTION

The very first thing to grasp, in order to understand ancient music, is the idea of a canon of proportion underlying all true musical systems. This canon is revealed to men as they study the vital progression of sound. For sound truly is a living force. Every sound is composed of three elements: a fundamental; an evolving force of an ascensional character (not unlike fire, which also always reaches upward under normal conditions) and lastly a number of secondary sounds, called overtones, which really represent the various stages reached by the sonorous element as it evolves toward the inaudible realms where it becomes for us silence. This evolution of the sonorous element occurs according to a very simple law, *viz.*, in arithmetical progression. In other words, if the fundamental sound embodies the vibratory rate 20, the overtones will be reckoned thus: 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, etc.

Now western musical theory recognizes this fact and calls such a progression of overtones issuing from a fundamental (that is, from any given sound taken as a point of departure) the "harmonic series." Furthermore, theoreticians have tried their best to justify the classical system of music (major and minor scales) by analyzing the various notes and intervals of the scales as parts of, or derived from, the harmonic series generated by the tonics of the scales. But it is a rather hopeless task, made altogether impossible by the adoption of equal temperament in the eighteenth century. Occidental music is not based really upon the natural law of sound evolution. It is the result of a misconception concerning the nature of sound, and of the gradual materialization of all musical values, more and more coloured by the power of a discrete intellectuality. It is a strange mixture of the two great systems of music of the world: the Chinese, built upon an ascending cycle of fifths (generating thus the chromatic scale including 12 semitones), and the Aryan, built upon the series of harmonics, and the progression of octaves.

ABSOLUTE RELATIONSHIP

The essential point to grasp is this: Both the Chinese and the Aryan systems, when pure and uncorrupted, are based upon the absolute type of relationship furnished to us by the harmonic series. This series constitutes the one and only natural canon of proportion there is for music, whenever and wherever conceived. Certain elements of this canon may be emphasized, and thus a definite type of musicality may be constituted. There may be, therefore, many types of musical systems (to be reduced to the two great types aforementioned); yet the canon of proportion which expresses the unchangeable and eternal law of sound never varies. Systems come and pass; either they conform to the law of sound, and they are natural, or, they do not, and then they are artificial and perverted musical expressions. Such has become our western system of music.

Again we must say that the fundamental factor in this musical corruption is our European concept of the "note." A note is understood by us as an abstract entity complete in itself. Not so in ancient times. A note was—and still is in India—only a centre of musical influence, or a milestone on a continuous road.

Says F. Gilbert Webb in the preface to a remarkable book by Shahinda, *Indian Music*:
 "... The Western musician concentrates his attention on the centre of each note forming a scale, and his ears will tolerate no variation from this central point; the Eastern musician concentrates his attention on the gradation of pitch between the centre of each note. Where the Western musician strides from note to note, his Eastern brother glides between."

INTEGRATION AND ISOLATION

To put it in a more philosophical way, the Ancients never separated the notes from the evolving life of sound. They always in some manner reintegrated notes into the natural growth of sound. We, on the contrary, isolate notes; we make of them separate individualities having but outer relations one with the other; there is no vital fluid uniting them. A note, for us, has no ancestors to which it is still attached; it has no children. This exemplifies exactly the social condition of the Western world. Take China. See how deep was the cult of the ancestors, how powerful the familial link uniting generations. The life of the family was circulating, as a fluid force, from generation to generation. This familial idea was the main social reality. To-day, in the West, it has been superseded by the individualistic idea, making of every being a lonely entity with the illusion of freedom and the bitterness of solitude.

pupil, Malavika, being introduced on the stage, to prove by her skill the greatness of her master as an expounder of the art. The Dance quartette striking up to the tune of the orchestra, the dancer whose features have already been familiar to the king from her portraiture, appears on the stage, as if she were the impersonation or the very spirit of the Dancing art itself, with her limbs, and features, perfectly moulded and faultless contoured by the rhythmic grace and the musical modulations of the art itself. There stands she, the perfect flower of maidenhood as yet ungathered by the hand of man, in a pose which is the nearest approximation to the Ardhamattali mode of the art, as is depicted in the Eastern Gopura of the Sri Nataraja at Chidambaram. Her left arm, the sonorous music of whose bracelets is still, rests gracefully on her slender waist, while her right is gracefully flung, and hangs gently as a garland, a little apart from her side which appear as if they have been chiselled and polished to a perfection of elegance by the hand of the Divine Silpi, Brahma himself, while her eyes bashfully fixed on the ground in maiden modesty, examine, whether the flowers strewn under her feet, or her toes are the softer of the two. She may even crush these—the visible arrows of Cupid, so that they may not pierce her heart before the time is as yet ripe for them to do their work. Then (1) by means of gestures into which flow the inmost words of her music, and manifest themselves as appropriate poses, (2) by proper steps which harmoniously follow the tune, and form a unity with the Rasa (proper emotion), (3) by the soft and flexibly gentle fingerings of the palm, indicative of the Abhinayas (Poses), she danced most charmingly as if the gestures were wedded to the deepest feelings of her heart and art.

In the Raghuvamsa the allusions to this art are scattered throughout the body of the work, though the last and the nineteenth Sarga contains the largest number of references to the subject, because the last king (of the Raghuvamsa), Agnivarma, was not only a voluptuary, but added as a saving grace to it, a deep appreciation of the art of dance, though to him only its erotic variety appealed most. Sometimes he himself adorned with garlands and bracelets played on the hand-drum (Pushkara), and made the expert dancing girls ashamed of errors of gesture, mistakes which even their Gurus, were unable to detect or point out, or refrained from doing so because of the disgrace it brought upon them as teachers. At the close of the dance, he wiped dry their wet faces and thereby only disarranged *Tilaka** marks on them, with the breath of his own mouth, thus drinking in as it were their loveliness and love in a way which was unattainable even by Indra and Kubera himself. Not satisfied with this pleasure alone, sometimes he sketched their portraits, even while in the company of his own regal wives, but often times beat even the great professional teachers of the art itself and made them ashamed of their own inherited skill perfected by practice, by training his own pupils in private and making them beat hollow in the game, the best trained pupils of others. Not only did dancing thus form an ordinary court recreation of a gay king like Agnivarma, but it also formed an item (Mangala Nritya) of the Jatakarma ceremony attendant on the birth of a heir to the throne, and was as such performed with much *ecstasy* on the birth of a son to king Dilipa, by the courtezans of the capital assembled in the palace of that monarch. Nay, the very king of the gods (Indra) assumed the Alida pose when he fought with the prince whose birth was celebrated by a dance, not only on earth, but also in heaven, but even the mango's freshly budding tendrils shaken by the Malaya wind taught gestures in dance to the people of Ayodhya, this fascinating even the minds of those who had conquered their tendencies to quarrel and lust.

K. N. S.

SHAMA'A—A REVIEW

With this number *Shama'a* closes its fifth volume. The following review of the second number of this year (January 1925) appeared in the *Forward*, the well-known Calcutta Daily founded and edited till his death by Chittaranjan Das. We quote the Review in full as we are sure it will interest our contributors, subscribers and other readers.

* The red mark worn on the brow by all Hindu women, not widows.

"The present volume of *Shama'a* maintains unimpaired the high standard of excellence which we have learnt to associate with this magazine. Original frontispieces are a feature of *Shama'a* and the present issue prints a beautiful reproduction of a finely chiselled statue in black stone of Surya belonging, probably, to the 12th century. A poem of Mr. Cousins on the First wind that broke the primeval trance of the trees "to glittering ecstasies of leaf and light" is given the place of honour. The lines are marked by the swelling melody and extreme depth of fancy and utterance which distinguish the poetic style of Mr. Cousins. Mr. Harindranath Chattopadhyaya contributes a verse-play on *Raidas, the Cobbler Saint* and, as usual, with his work mysticism, colour and wealth of imagery weave for us an exquisite garment of joy. The idea of incarnating Godhead even in the cobbler's hide and the conception of the great Goodness in terms of the tools and functions of the stonecutter, the farmer, the dhoby and the dyer, is essentially Hindu and the antithesis between the arrogant pharisaism of the high-born priests and the holy fire of the "simple soul-awakened saint" is brought out successfully. There is also a charming exposition of the art in Tsuba or the old Japanese sword guards, by Mr. E. E. Speight. It is a form of art which the march of modern civilisation has swept away and many of the old pieces have been lost in the earthquake. But in this beautiful art of old Japan are enshrined not only the artistic genius of men who fashioned these cabalistic designs, but also "memories of battle and adventure and lonely death." Mr. Speight's interpretations are the outcome of study and sympathetic assimilation of the mind of old Japan.

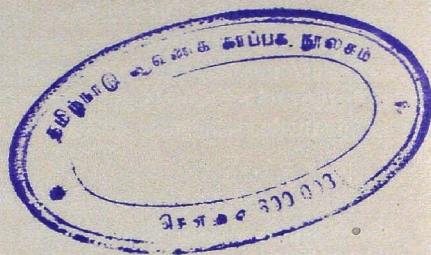
Shama'a publishes nothing that is not original and authoritative. Its contributors include poets, men of letters, philosophers and critics of eminence, but it does not hesitate to publish the work of the most obscure of men or women if it has literary merit or originality. Its contributions to the world of culture have already won the esteem of students of the Indian Renaissance, both in India and in foreign countries. It is a task which needs vision and courage of a remarkably high order to inaugurate in India an adventure of this class and when it is considered that the founder and editor of *Shama'a* is a lady with no other resources than her own enthusiasm for culture and moral force, the excellence of her magazine ranks as one of our literary achievements. During the five years it has been in existence, it has worked quietly and steadily without the least sign of lowering the standard of quality which the editor has set before it. *Shama'a* has now earned for itself a place in the world of first-rate periodical literature and even built so soon a tradition of its own. No library, no home which has pretensions to culture is complete without *Shama'a*. Still, the high quality of the magazine and the solid worth of its articles necessarily limit its *clientele* to a very select class of readers and it is, perhaps, not without some significance that *Shama'a* has a wider constituency in foreign lands than in India. But it does not speak well for appreciation of culture and art in India, that an organ which is at once an outcome and an expression of the Indian Renaissance is not as widely received as it should be. It is no part of the policy of *Shama'a* or the intentions of its editor that the value of the work should be measured by numbers and no complaint has emanated from that quarter where, far from any sign of discontent, only confidence and hope prevail. But we certainly think that every one who can afford should avail himself of the opportunities of study and thought which the magazine unfolds in abundant measure.

These are thoughts which each succeeding issue of *Shama'a* has suggested, and the number under Review brings them home to us afresh. We may add that the pleasure we have derived from a study of this magazine is heightened by the circumstance that the editor is a Bengalee lady of distinction who has carried into Southern India some spark of the Renaissance which had its origin in our province." (*Forward*, February 1925.)

192009

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

Our new contributors to this number are **Fraulein E. Hirschberg** from Berlin. She is Secretary to the greatest of Germany's living authors, Gerhart Hauptmann, Poet and Dramatist. Fraulein Hirschberg is a famous translator and is now engaged in translating the works of *Balzac* into German. **V. Saranatha Iyengar** is the Principal of the National College, Trichinopoly, South India, and is a well-known writer of charming prose. **Harindranath Chattopadhyaya's** *Plucked in Flight* will be published in enlarged book-form in October next by the **Shama'a Publishing House**. A detailed list of contributions to *Shama'a* for the past five years will be published in the first issue of the new volume in October 1925—July 1926.



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Some Appreciations

Sri Aurobindo Ghose in *Arya*—"Here perhaps are the beginnings of a supreme utterance of the Indian soul in the rhythms of the English tongue . . . The genius, power, newness of this poetry is evident . . . We may well hope to find in him a supreme singer of the vision of God in Nature and Life and the meeting of the divine and the human which must be at first the most vivifying and liberating part of India's message to a humanity that is now touched everywhere by a growing will for the spiritualising of the earth-existence."

Rabindranath Tagore—"I feel sure you have all the resources of a poet in lavish measure."

Æ—"People can learn to write quite excellent prose in a language not their own, but poetry is built on refinements in expression which are rarely learned by any except those who have heard the language spoken around their cradles. I am astonished that in spite of this you have attained such a power of expression. Your verse has beautiful things in it."

Allec Meynell—"It is exceedingly interesting to me to see such a meeting of Eastern and Western imagination as I think your poetry brings about."

Laurence Binyon—"Your verse will find its way because it is truly poetical—'The Fountain' is a beautiful poem and in 'Freedom,' 'The flowers wild foot in the cold grey clod' is lovely. These are things that proclaim you a poet—I think your command of English is wonderful."

Yone Noguchi writes—"DEAR POET,—I thank you for your welcome gift—those two books of your new poems are so delightful. Your youthfulness in poetry inspires me, and makes me live in a new world of fire and wisdom."

Padraic Colum—"Every poem in the book (*Perfume of Earth*) has given me great delight. 'The Marriage of the Rat' has vigorous imagination in it, and besides imagination it has a delightful humour. And the poem about 'the Peacock' pleased me so much that I now know it by heart. All the poems in the book are delightful and it is amazing to me that you, coming out of another tradition, have been able to get such spontaneous verse-forms in English."

Harold Childs—"('The Magic Tree.')" "You do not need now to be told that your use of English is really remarkable and that you make of it a live language to which you can add something of your own which perhaps no Englishman born could contribute. The profound concepts of physical and spiritual life which the poems suggest or state so musically, simply and with such beautiful imagery . . . I cannot help saying that to me personally they appeal with very great sympathetic force. 'Dust and Star' especially is full of wisdom not easily come by outside poetry. (On *Perfume of Earth*)—"The poems gave me great pleasure—both the sweet pure music of them and the great thoughts which you express with such admirable simplicity and profound implication. Work like yours is specially refreshing and cheering at a time when very much English poetry is confined to a rather harsh and defiant materialism. I keep opening the book anew and always light on something beautiful and deep."

James H. Cousins—"This young Indian poet . . . shows the way at the beginning of this century out of the deep valleys of gloom and uncertainty into the sunlight and elevation of inner realisation of divinity."

S. Fowler Wright, Editor, "*Poetry*" (England) in his review of *Pandalik*, a Verse-Play, says—"It is the work of a poet whose reputation is already established among those who can recognise good work before the time of popular acclamation."

**The Shama'a Publishing House, Aghore Mandir, Mount Road,
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